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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND ADMINISTRATION

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE,

Earl of Orford,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

WILLIAM COXE, M.A. F.R.S. F.A.S.

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MEMOIRS

OF

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

PERIOD THE SEVENTH:

From the Death of Queen CAROLINE, to the Reſignation of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE;

1737—1742.

CHAPTER THE FIFTIETH:

1737—1738.

Hiſtorical Deduction of the commercial Treaties between Spain and England, relating to America.—Spaniſh Depredations.—Meeting of Parliament.—Debate on the Reduction of the Army.—Reſolution, prohibiting the Publication of Debates.

HITHERTO the miniſter had maintained the grand ſyſtem of policy, which he had laid down as neceſſary for the ſupport of the proteſtant ſucceſſion, and for the maintenance of internal tranquillity, which he juſtly viewed as paramount to all other conſiderations; and it may be confidently aſſerted, without the imputation of partiality, that to his firmneſs and addreſs, Great Britain was *ſolely* indebted for a longer period of peace, than had been experienced ſince the revolution. The advantages which reſulted from this

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ſyſtem were incalculable. But the nation was ſated with ſo great a bleſſing; and the time arrived, when the violence of party, the clamours of merchants, the dreams of heroic grandeur, and the horror of national degradation, overcame the repugnance of the miniſter, and plunged England into war.

Excluſive claims of Spain to America.

In conſequence of having firſt diſcovered the new world, and by virtue of an inveſtiture from Pope Alexander the Sixth to Ferdinand the Catholic, Spain aſſumed an excluſive right to all the continent of America. The other nations of Europe, however, did not acquieſce in this chimerical claim, and Portugal, in particular, made a ſettlement in the Braſils, which the Spaniards could not prevent. But when Philip the Second acquired poſſeſſion of Portugal, Braſil fell under his dominion. Having thus obtained poſſeſſion of the only colony in America which had at that time been occupied by another power, he maintained with greater weight his excluſive right; and ſo formidable was his naval force, that all attempts made by the Engliſh, in the reign of Elizabeth, to ſettle and trade in South America, were rendered ineffectual. When the naval power of Spain declined, by the defeat of the Armada, and when the vaſt fabric of her empire began to moulder away under the feeble ſucceſſors of Philip the Second; the Dutch, French, and Engliſh formed ſettlements on the continent and iſlands of America. But long after the Engliſh had made permanent eſtabliſhments in America, Spain did

Settlements of other nations.

not renounce her original title, and even in times of peace, hoſtilities ſeldom ceaſed in the Weſt Indies *. Chapter 50. 1737 to 1738.

At length in 1667, a treaty was concluded between England and Spain, which, though looſely worded, was a tacit acknowledgment of the Britiſh poſſeſſions in America. Treaties with England.

This treaty, the eighth article alone excepted, related ſolely to Europe, but was afterwards wreſted by the partiſans of the Spaniſh war, as relating no leſs to America. It allowed freedom of navigation and commerce, in all places where commerce was before carried on, and is principally remarkable for permitting the liberty of ſearching merchant ſhips, ſailing near the ports and in the ſeas belonging to the reſpective countries, and of confiſcating contraband goods, which expreſſion alluded to arms or ammunition, and was principally intended to prevent the Engliſh ſhips from ſupplying the ſtates of Barbary with military ſtores. But as the treaty was confirmed and referred to by all ſubſequent contracts, it gave occaſion to the ſearching of ſhips, by the Spaniſh guarda coſtas in the American ſeas; an article which afterwards occaſioned the violent diſputes on both ſides, that finally terminated in the Spaniſh war. This compact was introductory to a more

* For this inquiry I have principally conſulted two able and perſpicuous papers, drawn up by Horace Walpole. (1.) Deduction on the depredations between Great Britain and Spain, the Cauſes of them, and Hints for Remedies." (2.) "Conſiderations relating to the Navigation and Commerce of Great Britain in America, with reſpect to the Treaties with Spain, and the Depredations of the Guarda Coſtas." Walpole Papers.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. more explicit treaty in 1670, which ſeems to have been the firſt by which Spain formally acknowledged the right of any other nation to part of the new world.

The treaty of 1670 ſolely relates to America; and beſides confirming to the Engliſh, the right of ſovereign dominion of all lands in the Weſt Indies, then poſſeſſed by them, regulates, in the moſt ſpecific terms, the mode of intercourſe in that quarter. The 9th article forbids the reſpective ſubjects of each nation from ſailing or trading with the colonies or dominions of the other in the Weſt Indies, yet permits ſuch navigation and commerce to be exerciſed according to a licence, granted by either ſovereign.

The letter and ſpirit of this treaty were at direct variance with each other; the letter prohibited and the ſpirit encouraged a mutual trade between the two nations. For although the expreſs terms prohibited all commerce with the Spaniſh ports in the Weſt Indies, yet a great facility was given to the mutual intercourſe, by the formal permiſſion, that Engliſh ſhips ſhould be allowed to put into Spaniſh harbours, if forced by ſtorms or other inconveniences, and continue there until they had refreſhed themſelves, and refitted, without giving notice to the governor, unleſs they were three or four together. Notwithſtanding alſo the right and pre-eminence which the Spaniards claimed to the American ſeas, care was to be taken, that the liberty of navigation ſhould not be diſturbed. Theſe ſtipulations inconteſtably

conteſtably prove that the Spaniards were inclined to favour the Engliſh, by conniving at, though they did not permit the trade, and ſuch were the effects of this memorable treaty. Chapter 50. 1737 to 1738.

In virtue of thoſe treaties, the Spaniards claimed a right, which they continually exerciſed, of ſearching the Britiſh merchant ſhips which paſſed near their American ports. Claims of ſearch.

From the concluſion of the treaty of 1670, to the death of Charles the Second of Spain, a ſtrict friendſhip and union ſubſiſted between the two crowns, both in Europe and America, and a flouriſhing, although illicit trade, was, by the connivance and indulgence of Spain, carried on between the Engliſh and Spaniſh plantations. The reaſon for this favourable treatment is evident. The great oppoſition and rivalſhip which then ſubſiſted between France and Spain, and the deſire of France to become miſtreſs of the Low Countries, inclined Spain to conſider the Engliſh as her moſt uſeful friends, and the moſt capable of protecting or incommoding, by their maritime force, her foreign dominions. It was no wonder, therefore, that the Spaniards not only ſtrictly obſerved their treaties, but even extended their indulgence, with reſpect to trade, farther than could be claimed by ſpecific ſtipulations. Trade indirectly permitted.

It was eaſy to foreſee that the acceſſion of a prince of the houſe of Bourbon to the throne, would affect the Britiſh trade to Spaniſh America. The conſequences of this event would have been immediately viſible, had not the war of the

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. succeſſion, in which Spain became the theatre of bloody hoſtilities, rivetted the attention of Philip the Fifth to his European dominions. But he was no ſooner firmly eſtabliſhed on the throne, than he turned his views to the American trade. The treaty of commerce which was concluded at the peace of Utrecht, between Great Britain and Spain, introduced a material alteration in the intercourſe between the two nations. The 9th article of the treaty of 1670, which granted permiſſion of trade to the ports and places in the Weſt Indies, with the licence of the ſovereign, was annulled; a contract, commonly called the aſſiento treaty, for ſupplying the Spaniſh colonies with a certain number of negroes, was granted to the South Sea company, for thirty years, with the privilege of annually ſending a ſingle ſhip of a certain burthen to Spaniſh America, laden with European merchandiſe. Excepting theſe alterations, the treaties of 1667 and 1670 were confirmed, and although thoſe treaties were broken during the two ſhort wars which took place between Spain and England in 1718 and 1727, yet as they were renewed by the quadruple alliance, and the treaty of Seville, the trade to America was nominally placed, in all other reſpects, upon the ſame footing as it ſtood under Charles the Second of Spain.

The aſſiento.

Origin of diſputes.

It ſoon, however, appeared, that new principles were adopted in the Spaniſh counſels, exactly the reverſe of their former proceedings. The letter of the American treaty was now followed, and the ſpirit

ſpirit by which it was dictated abandoned. Although the Engliſh retained the liberty of putting into the Spaniſh harbours, for the purpoſe of refitting and proviſioning, yet they were far from enjoying the ſame advantages of carrying on a friendly and commercial intercourſe. They were now watched with a ſcrupulous jealouſy, ſtrictly viſited by guarda coſtas, and every effectual means adopted to prevent any commerce with the colonies, excepting what was allowed to the annual ſhip. The cauſe of this alteration was evident. Spain was governed by a ſovereign connected with France by blood and policy; deprived of the Netherlands, ſhe no longer conſidered England as her natural ally, and was not intereſted to obtain her friendſhip by commercial ſacrifices. The influence of theſe conſiderations was occaſionally ſuſpended, during the temporary miſunderſtandings between Spain and France. At thoſe periods, a more friendly intercourſe was connived at, and this variation in the policy of Spain gave riſe to a variety of miſconſtructions. Chapter 50. 1737 to 1738.

From the long continuance of this trade, the Britiſh merchants began to conſider it as a preſcriptive right, and not matter of indulgence, and were unwilling to renounce ſo profitable a branch of commerce, which ſo many of them purſued in an open and daring manner. They continually put into the Spaniſh harbours, under pretence of refitting and refreſhing; and in many places almoſt publicly diſpoſed of European merchandiſe, in exchange for gold and ſilver. Other Illicit trade.

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veſſels ſailing near their ports and harbours, were repaired to by ſmugglers, or ſent their long boats towards the ſhore, and dealt with the natives.

The Spaniards complained that the aſſiento * annual ſhip, was followed by ſeveral other veſſels which moored at a diſtance, and as it diſpoſed of its cargo, continually ſupplied it with freſh goods; that the fair of Panama, once the richeſt of the world, where the Spaniſh merchants were accuſtomed to exchange gold and ſilver for European merchandiſe, had conſiderably fallen, and that the Engliſh monopoliſed the commerce of America.

It was no wonder, therefore, that the guarda coſtas, and other armed veſſels, made vigorous exertions to prevent this illicit traffic, that ſome illegal captures were made, and ſome occaſional acts of violence and cruelty committed. The diſtance from Europe, the inſolence of the Engliſh ſailors, the delays of the Spaniſh tribunals, and the intereſt of the governors in declaring the veſſels confiſcated, becauſe they had a ſhare in the cargo, rendered frequent redreſs of grievances extremely difficult, if not impracticable. The merchants who ſuffered made violent clamours, over-rated their loſſes, and exaggerated the accounts of inſult and barbarity committed by the Spaniards.

Volumes and volumes have been written by the Engliſh and Spaniards on the ſubject of theſe depredations:

* Deſormeaux Hiſtoire d'Eſpagne, tom. 5, p. 448.

predations: but as each ſide endeavoured to pervert facts, and gave different conſtructions to the moſt ſimple expreſſions, the diſpute could never be finally ſettled. The ſtate of theſe differences, and the difficulty of adjuſting them, are well explained in a few words by Keene, in a letter to the duke of Newcaſtle: Chapter 50. 1737 to 1738.

"Upon the whole, the ſtate of our diſpute ſeems to be, that the commanders of our veſſels always think, that they are unjuſtly taken, if they are not taken in *actual* illicit commerce, even though proofs of their having loaded in that manner be found on board of them; and the Spaniards on the other hand preſume, that they have a right of ſeizing, not only the ſhips that are continually trading in their ports, but likewiſe of examining and viſiting them on the high ſeas, in order to ſearch for proofs of fraud, which they may have committed; and till a medium be found out between theſe two notions, the government will always be embarraſſed with complaints, and we ſhall be continually negotiating in this country for redreſs, without ever being able to procure it *."

While the queſtion of Spaniſh depredations was agitated, other differences ſubſiſted between England and Spain. The right of cutting logwood in the bay of Campeachy, and collecting ſalt in the iſland of Tortuga, was called in queſtion; and ſome diſputes aroſe in regard to the limits of Carolina Conteſted claims.

* Benjamin Keene's diſpatch to the duke of Newcaſtle, Madrid, December 13th, 1737. Walpole Papers.

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Carolina and Georgia. Geraldino, the Spaniſh agent in London, delivered a ſtrong memorial, claiming part of thoſe colonies which lay contiguous to Florida; and the demand was made in ſuch violent terms, that the miniſters were apprehenſive of an attack on the province of Georgia; accordingly a battalion of troops was ordered to embark from Gibraltar for America *.

Increaſing miſunderſtanding.

Though Elizabeth Farneſe had procured the throne of Naples and Sicily for Don Carlos, ſhe was diſſatisfied with the peace. She ſtill aſpired to the poſſeſſion of Parma and Tuſcany, which ſhe conſidered as hereditary poſſeſſions; and when on the death of John Gaſton, the laſt ſovereign of the houſe of Medicis, Tuſcany devolved on the duke of Loraine, ſhe beheld his ſucceſſion with an unfavourable eye: ſhe even made overtures to England, and inſinuated, that if aſſiſtance was effectually granted, Spain ſhould relinquiſh all claims on Gibraltar and Minorca, and accommodate all commercial differences, to the full ſatisfaction of England. But this overture, which tended to plunge Europe into a new war, being rejected, the queen of Spain was ſtill more irritated, and continued to maintain powerful armaments by ſea and land. In conformity to orders, ſent from the court of Madrid, the guarda coſtas became more vigilant and ſevere than ever; and repeated inſtances of their violence were tranſmitted to England.

Depredations.

A peti-

* The duke of Newcaſtle to Benjamin Keene, September 13th, 1737. Walpole Papers.

A petition was accordingly preſented to the king, by a large body of merchants trading to the Weſt Indies, complaining of theſe depredations, and ſtating ſpecific caſes of illegal captures and confiſcations. The king referred this petition to the cabinet council, before whom the merchants were heard. In conſequence of their evidence, the duke of Newcaſtle drew up a ſpirited memorial, ſhewing the nature of the trade, and giving ſuch an explanation of the treaties of 1667 and 1670, on the due underſtanding of which the affair ultimately reſted, as appeared to juſtify the complaints of the Britiſh traders, and to criminate the conduct of the Spaniards. This memorial, and the merchants' petition, were ſent to Mr, Keene, with orders to preſent it to the king of Spain. The memorial, after repeating the various applications which had been ineffectually made for reſtitution of ſhips and effects unjuſtly ſeized, and demanding ſatisfaction for the depredations and cruelties committed by the guarda coſtas, required the king of Spain to give effectual orders for puniſhing the perſons guilty of theſe atrocities, and for granting immediate reparation to his ſubjects; and concluded by obſerving, that if, contrary to expectation, theſe inſtances ſhould not have the deſired effect, the king would be obliged to procure for his ſubjects 'that ſatisfaction which they had a right to demand, by virtue of ſubſiſting treaties, and the law of nations. Mr. Keene preſented this memorial on the 10th of December; to which Philip replied, that he would do all in his

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Complaints of the merchants. October 11.

November.

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his power to preſerve the friendſhip of the king of England. Notwithſtanding the preſſing importunities of Mr. Keene, who declared that nothing but immediate reſtitution and exemplary puniſhment could give ſatisfaction, the anſwer was not returned before the meeting of parliament. It alſo appeared, that the Spaniſh court did not view the ſubject in the ſame light as had been repreſented by the Engliſh cabinet, and controverted many poſitions advanced in the memorial.

Meeting of Parliament. January 24.

Such was the ſtate of the diſputes between England and Spain, when parliament was aſſembled. The ſpeech from the throne was unuſually ſhort. After recommending the diſpatch of public buſineſs with prudence and expedition; and ordering the eſtimates of the current expenditure to be laid before the houſe, the king truſted that the zeal, affection, and due regard which the commons had ſhewn in ſupporting his government and the public ſafety, would induce them to make the neceſſary proviſions for the honour, peace, and ſecurity of his crown and kingdom. He then concluded, by exhorting the houſe to lay aſide all heats and animoſities which might unneceſſarily obſtruct the ſeſſion. The addreſs, after condoling with the king, on his and the nation's irreparable loſs, by the death of the queen, aſſured him that they would avoid all heats and animoſities, and effectually raiſe the neceſſary ſupplies; and in gratitude for the regard which his majeſty had always ſhewn for the liberties and privileges of his ſubjects, would teſtify their affec-

tion

tion and zeal for the ſupport of his government, and the preſervation of the conſtitution *. Although little objection could be made, either to the ſpeech or to the addreſs, it did not, however, paſs without ſome petulant remarks from Shippen and Sir William Wyndham. Chapter 50. 1737 to 1738.

The determined aim of oppoſition was to increaſe the miſunderſtanding with Spain to ſuch a degree, as to render the adjuſtment of the diſputes impracticable, and by inflaming the nation with exaggerated accounts of Spaniſh cruelties and inſults, to compel the miniſter to enter into a war, which they conſidered as the probable means of obtaining his removal. Views of oppoſition.

The principal views of oppoſition being directed to involve the nation in war, they gave a ſtriking inſtance of their inconſiſtency and petulance, by reſiſting, with unuſual warmth, the motion for maintaining 17,400 men, and propoſing that the army ſhould be reduced to 12,000. Beſides the common topics of declamation, uſually urged againſt a ſtanding army, as obnoxious to the conſtitution, contrary to the principles on which the revolution was founded, and intended to ſupport the ſyſtem of corruption and arbitrary power; the debate took a new and unexpected turn. Shippen, with a view to caſt an odium on the authors of the revolution, and to prove that the liberties of the people had been better ſecured before, than ſince that period, affected to date the Debates on the reduction of the army. Feb. 3.

* Journals.

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the riſe of a ſtanding army in Britain, from the ninth year of William; accuſed the Whigs who ſhould vote for this queſtion, of having deſerted the principles of their anceſtors; and made a warm panegyric on the Tories, for having been uniformly ſteady in their adherence to the true principles of the Britiſh conſtitution.

Walpole's ſpeech.

In reply to theſe obſervations, the miniſter undertook to defend the conſiſtency of the Whigs who voted for the queſtion. He made a judicious diſtinction between an army compoſed entirely of Britiſh ſubjects, commanded by gentlemen of the beſt families, depending for its very being on the annual conſent of parliament, and one of foreign mercenary troops, compoſed of the loweſt populace, and commanded by men of no families or fortunes. After declaring that ſuch an army, ſo far from endangering the conſtitution, tended rather to preſerve it againſt faction and diſaffection, and contributed to protect the people againſt domeſtic rapine and foreign invaſion; he ſtated the reaſons for keeping up a body of troops, and particularly dwelt on that which aroſe from the number of perſons diſaffected to the government. He artfully endeavoured to confound the Tories with the Jacobites, and to conſider all thoſe who oppoſed government, as inclined to the Pretender, and particularly alluded to Shippen.

"Suppoſe Sir," he ſaid, "we have at preſent nothing to fear from any foreign enemy, yet it cannot be ſaid we are in abſolute ſecurity, or that we

we have nothing to fear. There is one thing I am afraid of, and it is, indeed, the only thing, I think, we have at preſent to fear. The fear I mean, is that of the Pretender: Every one knows there is ſtill a pretender to his majeſty's crown and dignity; there is ſtill a perſon who pretends to be lawful and rightful ſovereign of theſe kingdoms; and what makes the misfortune more conſiderable, there are ſtill a great number of perſons in theſe kingdoms ſo much deluded by his abettors, as to think the ſame way. Theſe are the only perſons who can properly be called diſaffected, and they are ſtill ſo numerous, that though this government had not a foreign enemy under the ſun, the danger we are in from the Pretender, and the diſaffected part of our ſubjects, is a danger which every true Briton ought to fear, a danger which every man who has a due regard for our preſent happy eſtabliſhment, will certainly endeavour to provide againſt, as much as he can. Chapter 50. 1737 to 1738.

"I am ſorry to ſee, Sir, that this is a ſort of fear, which a great many amongſt us endeavour to turn into ridicule; and for that purpoſe they tell us, that though there are many of our ſubjects diſcontented and uneaſy, there are but very few diſaffected: I muſt beg leave to be of a different opinion, for, I believe, moſt of the diſcontents and uneaſineſſes that appear among the people, proceed originally from diſaffection. No man of common prudence will profeſs himſelf openly a Jacobite; by ſo doing, he not only may injure his private fortune, but he muſt render himſelf leſs able

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able to do any effectual ſervice to the cauſe he has embraced, therefore there are but very few ſuch men in the kingdom. Your right Jacobite, Sir, diſguiſes his true ſentiments; he roars out for revolution principles; he pretends to be a great friend to liberty, and a great admirer of our ancient conſtitution; and under this pretence, there are numbers who every day endeavour to ſow diſcontents among the people, by perſuading them that the conſtitution is in danger, and that they are unneceſſarily loaded with many and heavy taxes. Theſe men know that diſcontent and diſaffection, are, like wit and madneſs, ſeparated by thin partitions; and therefore they hope, if they can once render the people thoroughly diſcontented, it will be eaſy for them to render them diſaffected. Theſe are the men we have moſt reaſon to be afraid of. They are, I am afraid, more numerous than moſt gentlemen imagine, and I wiſh I could not ſay they have been lately joined, and very much aſſiſted by ſome gentlemen, who, I am convinced, have always been, and ſtill are, very ſincere and true friends to our preſent happy eſtabliſhment.

"By the acceſſion of theſe new allies, as I may juſtly call them, the real but concealed Jacobites have ſucceeded even beyond their own expectation; and therefore I am not at all aſhamed to ſay I am in fear of the Pretender. It is a danger I ſhall never be aſhamed to ſay I am afraid of; becauſe it is a danger we muſt always be more or leſs expoſed to; and, I believe the leſs number of

of regular forces we keep up, the more we ſhall always be expoſed to this danger."

Sir John Hynde Cotton replied; "Sir, I do own it gives me a good deal of ſurpriſe, to hear gentlemen who act upon revolution principles, talk ſo utterly inconſiſtent with what was the language of the Whigs in former times. Sir, I know not what Whigs the honourable gentleman has been acquainted with, but I have had the honour and happineſs to be intimate with many gentlemen of that denomination: I have likewiſe, Sir, read the writings of many authors who have eſpouſed theſe principles; I have ſat in this houſe during the moſt material debates that have happened between them and the Tories; and I can declare from my own experience, that I never knew one who acted on true Whig principles, vote for a ſtanding army in time of peace. What the principles of the Whigs in former days were, I can only learn from reading or information; but I have heard of Whigs who were againſt all unlimited votes of credit: I have heard of Whigs who looked upon open corruption as the greateſt curſe that could befal any nation: I have heard of Whigs who eſteemed the liberty of the preſs to be the moſt valuable privilege of a free people, and triennial parliaments, the greateſt bulwark of their liberties; and I have heard of a Whig adminiſtration who have reſented injuries done to the trade of the nation, and have revenged inſults offered to the Britiſh flag. Theſe, Sir, are the principles, if I am rightly informed, that once characteriſed

Sir John Hynde Cotton.

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the true Whigs. Let gentlemen apply theſe characters to their preſent conduct, and then, laying their hands upon their hearts, let them aſk themſelves if they are Whigs?*"

Walpole's reply.

In reply, the miniſter again adverted to the danger from the Pretender's party, and inſinuated that the arts uſed by the diſcontented Whigs to ſet the people againſt the government, aided that cauſe: "For the faction," he ſaid, "which is in the intereſt of the perſon who diſputes his majeſty's title to the crown, always preſumes, that whoever is againſt the adminiſtration, is againſt the eſtabliſhment likewiſe; and nothing has more contributed to keep up the ſpirit of that party, than their induſtriouſly propagating that doctrine. This is the true reaſon that they look upon the lenity of that government as the effect of its weakneſs, and that they attribute the indulgence they meet with to our fears. This is the true reaſon why they endeavour to improve to their advantage every accident that happens to the nation, though, perhaps, it is very diſtant from their purpoſe, and fell out contrary to their hopes. This is the reaſon why, on the late melancholy event† that afflicted the nation, their hopes revived, their cabals were ſet on foot, and every tool of their party was employed in their conſultations, to know how to bring about their favourite point. There are many in our galleries now who know what I have ſaid to be true, and if they had the privilege of ſpeaking here, could, if they pleaſed, convince us how improper

* Chandler. † Alluding to the queen's death.

improper the propoſed reduction is, while ſuch a ſpirit ſubſiſts in the kingdom. Chapter 50. 1737 to 1738.

"I have known a time when gentlemen acted on true Whig principles; and at that time they ſeemed to be of opinion, that the beſt, if not the only way to ſecure us from popery and arbitrary power, was by ſecuring the preſent eſtabliſhment of the crown in his majeſty's perſon and family. They were then of opinion, that this was beſt done by keeping up a regular body of forces; and I ſhould be glad to know if the ſame reaſons do not ſubſiſt now as did then, or if they who are the enemies of our preſent eſtabliſhment, have been weakened by the oppoſition of theſe gentlemen to the adminiſtration *."

After a reply from Pulteney, and a few unimportant ſpeeches, the debate appeared to be finally concluded, and as no diviſion took place, the triumph on the ſide of the miniſter ſeemed complete. But the altercation was renewed on a ſubſequent day by the imprudence and petulance of the moſt violent Whigs, who were irritated at the aſſertions advanced by the Tories, that the maintenance of a ſtanding army was inconſiſtent with the true principles of Whiggiſm. Debate reſumed.

The report being made by the chairman of the committee of ſupply, the eſtimate for the regiment to be ſent to Georgia, was objected to; colonel Mordaunt very injudiciouſly deviated from the great diſtinction which the miniſter had laid down between Colonel Mordaunt's ſpeech.

* Chandler.

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between thoſe who promoted the cauſe of the Pretender, and thoſe who ſupported the proteſtant ſucceſſion, and introduced the more narrow diſtinction of Whig and Tory. He ſaid, "I have always gloried in being thought a Whig; I hope I ſhall never by my behaviour, either in this houſe, or without doors, give the leaſt occaſion to the world to think otherwiſe of me; and for this very reaſon, I am for keeping up an army, becauſe I *think the keeping up an army abſolutely neceſſary for ſupporting the Whig intereſt*, and preſerving the peace and quiet of the people. In every diſpute that has happened of late years about our army, I have looked upon the queſtion to be chiefly, *whether Whig or Tory ſhould prevail?* And as I have always thought, as I believe every unprejudiced Whig in the kingdom thinks, *that if the army ſhould be diſbanded, or very much reduced, the Tory intereſt would prevail*; therefore, I have generally been againſt ſuch reductions, and always ſhall be cautious of agreeing to any ſuch propoſition. Nay, I am ſo firmly attached to the Whig intereſt, that if I ſhould think four times the number of troops abſolutely neceſſary for ſupporting that intereſt, I would be for keeping up a ſtanding army four times as numerous as that we have now on foot."

Lord Polwarth's reply.

Theſe injudicious aſſertions infuſed a new ſpirit into the anti-miniſterial Whigs. Lord Polwarth, in a ſenſible and animated ſpeech, juſtified the Whigs who oppoſed government, and explained

the nature of the old Whig principles. He endeavoured to prove that the queſtion did not turn on diſtinguiſhing who were Whigs and who were Tories, but ſimply according to their preſent behaviour and political conduct; from thence he inſinuated, that the miniſterial party, who affected to diſtinguiſh themſelves by the appellation of Whigs, acted in contradiction to the principles of that body, and were in reality Tories; and that thoſe whom they invidiouſly ſtyled Tories, while they were directed and actuated by this principle, were in reality Whigs. After making theſe obſervations, he added, "I am apt to ſuſpect that my honourable friend calls this the Whig intereſt, and if ſo, I ſhall readily agree with him, that what he calls the Whig intereſt, being what I call the Tory intereſt, cannot be ſupported without a ſtanding army. This may be a prevailing argument with him for being againſt any reduction, but it is an argument that has quite a different influence with me; for I think no intereſt, nor any party of men, ought to be ſupported, if a ſtanding army becomes neceſſary for their ſupport *." Neither the miniſter nor any of his adherents, took any ſhare in theſe frivolous altercations, which only tended to the unneceſſary prolongation of the debate. After ſpeeches from Lyttleton, Sir Thomas Saunderſon, and Pitt, the motion for reducing the army was negatived by 249 againſt 164.

Chapter 5c. 1737 to 1738.

* Chandler.

I have

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Misrepresentations of authors.

I have thought it necessary to enlarge on this debate, and to particularize the part taken by the minister, as well because it proves that the address which Walpole had employed to render the Tories odious, by confounding them with the Jacobites, had not been unsuccessful, as because the substance of the speech has been shamefully misrepresented by some modern writers, who have indirectly attributed to Walpole, expressions used by others which he never employed, and have totally mistaken the spirit and meaning of his arguments *.

The

* The accounts of this debate given by Smollett and Belsham, are here subjoined to shew that Smollett has misrepresented the debate, and how carelessly Belsham has copied his narrative, and added his own errors.

SMOLLETT.

"*The adherents of the minister fairly owned*, that if the army should be disbanded, or even considerably reduced, the *Tory interest would prevail*: that the present number of forces was absolutely necessary to maintain the peace of the kingdom, which was filled with clamour and discontent, as well *as to support the Whig interest*; and that they would *vote for keeping up four times the number*, should it be found expedient for that purpose. The members in the opposition replied, that this was a severe satire on the ministry, whose conduct had given birth to such a spirit of discontent. They said it was in effect a tacit acknowledgment, that what they called the Whig interest was no more than an inconsiderable party, which had engrossed the administration by indirect methods, which acted contrary to the sense of the nation, and depended for support upon a military power, by whom the people in general were overawed, and consequently enslaved. They affirmed, that the discontent of which the ministry complained, was in

BELSHAM.

The ministry scrupled not to affirm, "That if the army was disbanded, the *Tory interest would quickly predominate*: that the kingdom was filled with clamour and discontent, which a standing military force only could effectually suppress: that the support of the *Whig interest demanded the maintenance of this force*; and it was hoped and presumed the house would *triple the number*, if adjudged necessary for this purpose." The members of the opposition replied, in their accustomed strain of *vain reasoning*, "that this vindication contained in it a sentence of self-condemnation, for to what cause could the spirit of clamour and discontent be ascribed, but to the conduct of the ministry? and it was from their own acknowledgment clear, that what they were pleased to style the Whig interest, was, in fact, an inconsiderable party, which had engrossed the power of

government

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The Spaniſh affairs ſo much occupied the public attention, that all other conſiderations were totally overlooked. Had not this been the caſe, a reſolution made this ſeſſion, would have attracted public notice, and have incurred the cenſure of thoſe writers who affect a high regard for the liberty of the preſs. I allude to the enforcement of the ſtanding order, prohibiting the publication of the debates while the houſe was ſitting and the extenſion of that prohibition to the receſs. The ſpeaker ſaid; he ſaw with concern, that an account of their proceedings was inſerted in the newſpapers,

Prohibition of printing debates.

effect owing to that very ſtanding army, which perpetuated their taxes, and hung over their heads as the inſtruments of arbitrary power and oppreſſion. Lord Polwarth explained the nature of Whig principles, and demonſtrated that the party which diſtinguiſhed itſelf by this appellation, no longer retained the maxims by which the Whigs were originally characteriſed. Sir John Hynde Cotton, who ſpoke with the courage and freedom of an old Engliſh baron, declared he never knew a member of that houſe, who acted on true Whig principles, vote for a ſtanding army in time of peace, &c." Hiſtory of England, vol. 3. p. 5.

Smollett imputes to the *adherents of the miniſter*, expreſſions which were only uſed by *one* individual member, who was not in adminiſtration; and Belſham, omitting the words *adherents of*, and putting only *the miniſtry*, leaves the reader to ſuppoſe, that Walpole himſelf, or ſome of the miniſtry, had been ſo abſurd as to declare, that a ſtanding army was neceſſary to ſupport the Whig intereſt, and that if the army was diſbanded, the Tory intereſt would prevail.

government by indirect and unconſtitutional methods, which acted contary to the ſenſe of the nation, and which depended for ſupport upon that very military force which was the grand ſource of the national diſcontent, which perpetuated the national taxes, and which menaced the national liberties with deſtruction. The claim of the miniſtry and their adherents in the houſe to the appellation of Whigs, was warmly diſputed; and Sir John Hynde Cotton declared, that a genuine Whig could never vote for a ſtanding army in time of peace, &c." This author has ſubſtituted, of his own authority, *frequent parliaments*, for *triennial parliaments*, the expreſſion uſed both in Chandler and Smollett. Memoirs of the Brunſwick Family, vol. 1. p. 372.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. newſpapers, and other periodical publications, by which means the ſpeeches were liable to great miſrepreſentations, and hoped the houſe would find ſome method of preventing this abuſe. Sir William Yonge, Sir William Wyndham, and Winnington, agreed with the ſpeaker on the propriety of this meaſure. Pulteney enforced the neceſſity of putting a ſtop to the practice ſo juſtly complained of. He was of opinion, that no appeals ſhould be made to the public concerning the proceedings of the houſe. He urged, that to print ſpeeches, even if they ſhould not be miſrepreſented, was making the ſpeakers accountable without doors, for what they ſaid within. He then declared, that however anxious to check this ſcandalous practice, he was unwilling that it ſhould be done in ſuch a manner as might affect the liberty of the preſs, or appear as if the houſe claimed a privilege to which it was not entitled. That although he had no doubt it was in the power of that houſe to puniſh printers for publiſhing an account of their proceedings, even during the receſs, yet as that practice had been long connived at, he did not wiſh to puniſh any paſt offences, and thought it ſufficient to paſs reſolutions which might deter in future. He urged, that ſuch a reſolution would not affect any perſon who ſhould print an account of their proceedings when the parliament ſhould be diſſolved, and alluded to the hiſtory of the parliament which had been publiſhed in 1713, the author of which, he obſerved, had never been called to account by either houſe of parliament. He added, that

that parliaments, when they do amiſs, ought to be arraigned with freedom; he hoped this parliament would not deſerve it, but if it did, he ſhould be ſorry that any reſolutions were entered into which might prevent its being repreſented in its proper colours. The miniſter, he truſted, would agree with him in this opinion; and he hoped that the houſe would never ſtretch their privileges ſo far as to cramp the freedom of writing on public affairs. "But this conſideration," he concluded, "can never affect the reſolution which gentlemen propoſe to come to now. We have rather been too remiſs in not putting a ſtop to this ſcandalous practice that has been long complained of. I always thought that theſe pamphlets containing our debates, were circulated by encouragement, and at the expence of government; for, till the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt ſave one (Mr. Winnington) mentioned the magazines in the manner he did, I have ſtill been uſed to look on the publiſhing them as a miniſterial project; for I imagined that it being found impracticable to make the people buy and read the Gazetteer by itſelf, it was contrived ſo that the writings of the other party, being printed in the ſame pamphlet, it might be ſome invitation to the public to look into the Gazetteer, and I dare ſay, Sir, the run which the magazines have had, has been entirely owing to this ſtratagem. The good and bad are printed together, and people are by this means drawn in to read both. But I think it is now high time to put a ſtop to the effects they may have, by coming to a reſolution that

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. that may at leaſt prevent any thing being publiſhed during the time of our ſitting as a houſe, which may be impoſed upon the world as the language and words of gentlemen who perhaps never ſpoke them."

The obſervations of the miniſter, and his reply to theſe invectives, which had little reference to the ſubject, was manly and dignified, and bears all the internal marks of authenticity.

"Sir, you have with great juſtice puniſhed ſome perſons for forging the names of gentlemen on the backs of letters; but the abuſe now complained of is, I conceive, a forgery of a worſe kind; for it tends to miſrepreſent the ſenſe of parliament, and impoſe upon the underſtanding of the whole nation. It is but a petty damage that can ariſe from a forged frank, when compared with the infinite miſchiefs that may be derived from this practice. I have read ſome debates of this houſe, Sir, in which I have been made to ſpeak the very reverſe of what I meant. I have read others, wherein all the wit, learning, and argument, have been thrown into one ſide, and on the other, nothing but what was low, mean, and ridiculous; and yet when it comes to the queſtion, the diviſion has gone againſt the ſide which, upon the face of the debate, had reaſon and juſtice to ſupport it. So that, had I been a ſtranger to the proceedings, and to the nature of the arguments themſelves, I muſt have thought this to have been one of the moſt contemptible aſſemblies on the face of the earth. What notion, then, Sir, can the public, who

who have no other means of being informed of the debates of this houſe, than what they have from theſe papers, entertain of the wiſdom and abilities of an aſſembly, who are repreſented to carry every point againſt the ſtrongeſt and the plaineſt argument and appearances. However, Sir, as I believe gentlemen are by this time ſenſible of the neceſſity of putting a ſtop to this practice, it will be quite unneceſſary for me to argue a point wherein we are all agreed. But I cannot help taking notice of one thing mentioned by the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt, ſince I was the perſon to whom he was pleaſed to appeal. He mentioned that the hiſtory of a whole parliament had been printed, and ſeemed to inſinuate that people might make very free with parliaments. Really, Sir, I will be ſo free as to own, that I do know of ſuch a pamphlet being printed: nay, I believe, I know a little of the author, and the publication. But at the ſame time, I know, Sir, that that was one of the worſt houſes of commons that ever this nation ſaw; that they had a deſign to introduce the Pretender; that they had approved of a ſcandalous peace, and after the moſt glorious war that was ever carried on; and had it not been for ſome very favourable circumſtances, they would have ſet aſide the preſent happy eſtabliſhment in his majeſty's perſon and family. I hope, Sir, no gentleman will find fault with any reflections that could be thrown out againſt ſuch a houſe of commons; I hope, likewiſe, that no gentleman will pretend to draw any parallels betwixt

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twixt their conduct and our's. But, Sir, beſides theſe conſiderations, gentlemen are to reflect, that the parliament which was deſcribed in that hiſtory, had been diſſolved before the hiſtory itſelf was publiſhed. And not only ſo, but there is a noble lord * in the other houſe, who can, if he pleaſes, inform gentlemen, that the author of that hiſtory was ſo apprehenſive of the conſequences of printing it, that the preſs was carried to his houſe, and the copies printed off there.

"This, I think, Sir, will be ſufficient to ſhew, that the author did not think himſelf out of danger, even though the parliament was diſſolved. But I am not for carrying things to ſuch a length at preſent. It may be ſufficient, if we come to a reſolution to prevent the publication of any part of our proceedings during the receſs, as well as the ſitting of the parliament. As to what the honourable gentleman ſays, with regard to the magazines being publiſhed and diſtributed by order, and at the expence of government, I don't know if he was ſerious or not. If he was ſerious, he muſt have a very contemptible opinion of the underſtanding of thoſe gentlemen, who have the honour to ſerve his majeſty, if he imagines that they would be ſo weak as to propagate papers, every page almoſt of which had a direct tendency againſt their own intereſt. If any gentleman will take the trouble, which, I own, I very ſeldom do, to look into theſe magazines, he will find four pages wrote againſt government for one that is in its

* Probably lord Cobham.

its favour; and generally the ſubject is of ſuch a nature, as would be ſeverely puniſhed under any other government than our own. If the honourable gentleman was not ſerious, I think a more proper time might have been choſen for ſhewing his wit, than while we are conſidering of the means of putting a ſtop to a practice, which he himſelf, and every gentleman who ſpoke in this debate, allows ſo nearly to affect the dignity and privileges of this houſe. For my own part, Sir, I am extremely indifferent, what opinions ſome gentlemen may form of the writers in favour of government. But Sir, I ſhall never have the worſe opinion of them for that; there is nothing more eaſy than to raiſe a laugh; it has been the common practice of all minorities when they were driven out of every other argument. I ſhall never be afraid to do what I think right, and for the ſervice of his majeſty and my country, becauſe I may be laughed at. But really Sir, I will be ſo free as to ſay, that if the want of wit, learning, good manners, and truth, is a proper object of contempt and ridicule, the writers in the oppoſition ſeem to me to have a much better title to both, than thoſe for the government. No government, I will venture to ſay, ever puniſhed ſo few libels, and no government ever had provocation to puniſh ſo many. I could name a government in this country, under which thoſe writings, which are now cried up, as founded upon the laws, and in the conſtitution, would have been puniſhed as libels, even by the gentlemen who are now the warmeſt advocates for the

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the liberty of the preſs, and for ſuffering the authors of thoſe daily libels that appear in print, to paſs with impunity. But I aſk pardon for what have ſaid, that may appear foreign to the preſent conſideration; I was led to it by what had been thrown out by the gentleman who ſpoke before."

It was then unanimouſly reſolved, "that it is a high indignity to, and a notorious breach of the privilege of this houſe, for any news writer, in letters or other papers (as minutes, or under any other denomination) or for any printer or publiſher, of any printed newſpaper of any denomination, to preſume to inſert in the ſaid letters or papers, or to give therein any account of the debates, or other proceedings of this houſe, or any committee thereof, as well during the receſs, as the ſitting of parliament; and that this houſe will proceed with the utmoſt ſeverity againſt ſuch offenders *."

It is remarkable that this reſolution paſſed without a ſingle diſſenting voice, and with little public animadverſion. It is no leſs remarkable, that not one of our hiſtorical writers has taken the ſmalleſt notice of the debate, which is the reaſon why I have deemed it not improper to give a place in theſe memoirs, to a tranſaction of ſuch great hiſtorical importance. This reſolution was not followed by any beneficial effects; on the contrary, it tended only ſtill farther to excite public curioſity, while it rendered truth more difficult of acceſs. It compelled the compilers of periodical publications to adopt a covert method of

* Chandler.

of giving the debates, which made it more easy to falsify them, and it is a well known fact, that after this period, the accounts became less authentic than before *. The Gentleman's and the London Magazine were the principal vehicles of the parliamentary debates. The Gentleman's Magazine published the debates in the senate of Lilliput, under the names of Lilliput and Brobdingnag, and the London Magazine gave a journal of the proceedings and debates in a political club, with Roman appellations. Each miscellany afterwards explained these fictitious titles in advertisements affixed to the respective volumes.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-FIRST:

1738.

Proceedings in Parliament relative to the Spanish Depredations.—Petitions.—Examination of Witnesses.—Case of Jenkins.—Report of the Committee.—Debates thereon.—Firm and temperate Conduct of Walpole.—Resolutions of both Houses.

Spanish depredations.

THE remainder of the session was principally devoted to the discussion of the Spanish depredations.

Petition of merchants.

On the 3d of March, the minority commenced their attack. A petition prepared with great art and asperity, from divers merchants, planters, and others, trading to and interested in the British plantations

* Tindal.

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tations in America, was preſented to the houſe by alderman Perry, recapitulating all that had paſſed in conſequence of former applications, and declaring that the Spaniards ſtill continued their depredations, and carried them to a greater height than ever.

Debates.

This petition was referred to a committee of the whole houſe. Alderman Perry, who preſented it, moved that the petitioners ſhould be heard by themſelves *and* counſel. The ſpeaker having objected, as a point of form, that it never was the cuſtom of the houſe to admit parties to be heard by themſelves *and* counſel, propoſed an amendment, by themſelves *or* counſel. Sir John Barnard and Sir William Wyndham objecting to this amendment, as no leſs captious and frivolous, than highly prejudicial to the petitioners; the miniſter ſaid,

Walpole's ſpeech.

" Sir, I muſt humbly beg leave to differ from both the honourable gentlemen. The judgment which we ſhould form in this caſe, ought to be grounded on facts as they are fairly repreſented, not as they are artfully aggravated. Every gentleman, I believe, from his bare reflection on the injuries our merchants have received from Spain, feels within his breaſt an indignation ariſe, which there is no occaſion to increaſe by the power of eloquence, or the arts of a lawyer. When gentlemen ſee an affair through the miſt that paſſion raiſes before their eyes, it is next to impoſſible they ſhould form a juſt judgment. I believe there is ſcarce any gentleman here, who is not acquainted with as much geography, and as much of the hiſtory, both of

of Britain and Spain, as may enable him, from a plain repreſentation of facts, to judge whether the allegations in this petition be true or falſe. Now, Sir, are not the merchants themſelves the moſt proper to give us this repreſentation? Are they not moſt immediately intereſted in the facts? Where then, is the neceſſity of counſel? Or what occaſion is there to work upon the paſſions, where the head is to be informed? I believe, Sir, every gentlemen will find his heart as much affected by the artleſs accounts of the ſufferers themſelves, as by the ſtudied rhetoric of the moſt eloquent counſel. However, Sir, I ſhall not take the liberty to make any motion on this head, but entirely ſubmit it to gentlemen's conſideration." Chapter 51. 1738.

The anſwer of alderman Willimot to theſe moderate remarks, will prove the temper by which the party in favour of the war were actuated. Willimot's anſwer.

"Sir, I think the petitioners ought to have liberty to be heard, not only by themſelves and counſel, but if it were poſſible that we could indulge them in other advantages, we ought to do it. To talk of working upon the paſſions!—— Can any man's paſſions be wound up to a greater height, can any man's indignation be more raiſed, than every free-born Engliſhman's muſt be, when he reads a letter which I received this morning, and which I have now in my hand. This letter gives an account that ſeventy of our brave ſailors are now in chains in Spain. Our countrymen in chains! and ſlaves to Spaniards! Is not this enough to fire the coldeſt? Is not this enough to

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rouſe all the vengeance of national reſentment? And ſhall we ſit here debating about words and forms, while the ſufferings of our countrymen call loudly for redreſs?" Notwithſtanding theſe intemperate effuſions, the houſe agreed to the amendment propoſed by the ſpeaker, that the committee ſhould be inſtructed to admit the petitioners to be heard, if they thought fit, by themſelves *or* counſel.

On the ſame day, other petitions were preſented, and referred to a committee of the whole houſe, in the ſame manner as that of the merchants. Sir John Barnard, after inveighing againſt theſe unjuſt ſeizures and depredations, and ſtating the neceſſity of preventing them in future, moved for an addreſs to the king, "That he would be graciouſly pleaſed to give directions for laying before the houſe, copies or extracts of the ſeveral petitions, repreſentations, memorials, and all other papers relating to the Spaniſh depredations upon the Britiſh ſubjects, which had been preſented to his majeſty, or delivered to either of his majeſty's principal ſecretaries of ſtate ſince Midſummer laſt; together with copies or extracts of ſuch memorials or repreſentations, as had been made either to the king of Spain or his miniſters, and the anſwers returned by them to the ſame; and together with copies or extracts of the letters written to his majeſty's miniſter at Madrid, with the anſwers received from him, relating to the ſaid depredations."

Motion for papers.

This motion brought on a long and warm debate, in which the cruelties and inſults of the Spaniards, and

and the puſillanimity of the Britiſh cabinet, were equally exaggerated. The miniſter, ever anxious to avoid any violent reſolutions, which might offend the irritable temper of the court of Madrid, and particularly to decline entering upon the queſtion concerning the right claimed by the Spaniards, of ſearching for illicit goods, ſtated the difficulty and delicacy of his ſituation, either in oppoſing or concurring with the motion. By oppoſing it, he was in danger of becoming obnoxious to the public, and by his concurrence, might act againſt his own judgment, and the intereſts of the king, which are always inſeparable from thoſe of the nation. He then adverted to the danger of creating a miſunderſtanding between the crown and parliament, if the commons ſhould call for papers, which ſhould be deemed improper for communication. Although he was for treating all the claims of Spain as unfounded, yet he was apprehenſive that ſuch difficulties might ariſe in reſiſting them, as would require much addreſs and wiſdom to remove. The king, had by the moſt prudent methods of negotiation, endeavoured to reconcile the intereſts of the kingdom with its peace; and the preſent was the critical period when the effects of thoſe negotiations were to take place.

Chapter 51. 1738. Walpole's objections.

He owned that the Britiſh merchants and ſeamen had been often treated moſt unjuſtly and inhumanly by the Spaniſh guarda coſtas, and that both the honour and intereſt of the nation were deeply concerned in obtaining reparation for ſuch injuries, and a proper ſecurity in future; at the ſame time,

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he declared that recourſe ought not to be had to arms, while there was any proſpect of obtaining redreſs in a peaceable manner.

"It is without doubt," he ſaid, "a very popular way of arguing, to talk highly of the honour, the courage, and the ſuperior power of this nation; and, I believe, I have as good an opinion of the honour, courage, and power of this nation, as any man can, or ought to have; but other nations muſt be ſuppoſed to have honour as well as we, and all nations generally have a great opinion of their courage and power. If we ſhould come to an open rupture with Spain, we might in all probability have the advantage; but victory and ſucceſs do not always attend upon that ſide which ſeems to be the moſt powerful. Therefore, an open rupture, or declared war between two potent nations, muſt always be allowed to be an affair of the utmoſt importance to both; and as this may be the conſequence of our preſent deliberations, we ought to proceed with great coolneſs, and with the utmoſt caution*."

He next recapitulated the late treaties and tranſactions with Spain, and endeavoured to prove, that the inflexibility of the Spaniards was owing to the perplexed ſtate of affairs in Europe ſince the treaty of Seville, which had prevented the meeting of the commiſſioners for finally adjuſting the reſpective pretenſion of the two countries. He obſerved, that the claims of the Engliſh were not conſidered, either at home or abroad, to be ſo clear as

* Chandler.

as they were here repreſented. He attempted to ſhew, that the Spaniards had hitherto done as much to ſatisfy the Engliſh ſufferers as could well be expected, that the diſtance between Madrid and the Weſt Indies was conſiderable, that the Spaniſh governors were extremely inſolent, and not ſubject to ſufficient controul, and that therefore it was no wonder if the crown ſometimes found difficulties in bringing them to reaſon.

He gave ſome inſtances of ſhips that had been unconditionally releaſed by the Spaniards, of others, on giving ſecurity to ſtand trial whether they had been engaged in illicit trade; and he mentioned ſeveral whoſe claims were likely to be ſatisfied *.

He did not however, intend to oppoſe the communication of papers in general, but only of ſome, which if made public, might occaſion much inconvenience. He frankly acknowledged, that the laſt anſwer from the Spaniſh court was unſatisfactory, and if it ſhould be communicated to the houſe, and from thence, as muſt unavoidably happen, to the public, the moſt fatal conſequences might be produced. That notwithſtanding the harſhneſs of that anſwer, the miniſtry had ſent to the court of Madrid ſome propoſitions which might tend to ſoften matters. He ſaid, if they were not ſoon anſwered to the ſatisfaction of the king, he himſelf would move that every paper relating to Spain ſhould be laid before the houſe, but that till that anſwer

* Tindal.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. anſwer arrived, it would be improper to comply with the motion.

And Amendment. He concluded by moving as an amendment, the omiſſion of "anſwers from the court of Spain, and the Britiſh miniſter at Madrid." This candid and moderate ſpeech, which was peculiarly adapted to the temper of the houſe, who were not inclined to reject the whole motion, and which proved that he did not wiſh to protract the inquiry longer than prudence and policy directed, had a due effect. The temperate repreſentation of the miniſter, ably enforced by Horace Walpole, Sir William Yonge, Henry Pelham, and Sir Charles Wager, prevailed over the more violent counſels of the oppoſition, though ſupported by all the eloquence and abilities of Pulteney, Sir John Barnard, and Sir William Wyndham. The original motion was negatived by a majority of 164 againſt 99, and the amendment, as propoſed by the miniſter, carried without a diviſion *.

Carried.

Conduct of Geraldino. The triumphant majority with which this queſtion was carried, was productive of no eſſential advantage to the cauſe which Walpole was ſo anxious to ſupport. While the attempts were making to adjuſt the differences with Spain, and while the court of Madrid ſeemed inclined to make due reparation for the injuries complained of, Sir Thomas Fitzgerald, or, as he is uſually called, Don Thomas Geraldino, the Spaniſh miniſter, was employed in fomenting the diſturbances and inflaming the public diſcontents. He caballed with the leaders

* Chandler.

leaders in oppoſition, and acquainted them with the ſecret information which his inſtructions or his correſpondence enabled him to communicate. He did not heſitate to aſſert openly that the Engliſh miniſtry impoſed upon the people, in pretending that the court of Spain would be inclined to recede, in the ſmalleſt degree, from the claim of ſearching all ſhips which ſailed near their coaſts in America. His intemperance gave great advantages to oppoſition; and in the courſe of the debates in both houſes, many facts were diſcloſed by the members of that party, which ought to have been confined to the cabinets. The miniſtry, having ſoon diſcovered by whoſe means they obtained poſſeſſion of thoſe facts, complained of his imprudence, and deſired Mr. Keene to lay the indecency and conſequences of his conduct before the court of Madrid. But Geraldino had fruſtrated the effects of theſe repreſentations, by ſtating, that the views and principles, even of the miniſter himſelf, and the moſt pacific part of the Engliſh government, were abſolutely inconſiſtent with every maxim of the Spaniſh monarchy, and all the ſecurity of its trade. This information found a ready belief at Madrid, and their miniſters, through Geraldino's advice, became perſuaded, that they could not be ſo effectually ſerved as by fomenting and encouraging the diſcontents of the people of England againſt their government *.

Chapter 51. 1738.

At

* Tindal.

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At this period the houſe was daily inundated with petitions and papers relating to the inhumanities committed upon the Engliſh priſoners taken on board of trading veſſels. They repreſented theſe priſoners as not only inſulted and pillaged, but compelled to work in the Spaniſh dock yards and fortifications, with irons upon their legs, ſubſiſting upon loathſome proviſions, and over-run with vermin, frequently tortured and impriſoned in dungeons. Several captains and other ſeamen were examined at the bar of the houſe, and if full credit be given to the witneſſes, the facts were unqueſtionably proved; but their evidence muſt be received with great caution. They were not examined upon oath, and were not confronted with any teſtimony on the ſide of the Spaniards. They were induced by their own intereſts, and by the hopes of obtaining reparation, to exaggerate their injuries. They ſaw that it was popular to inveigh againſt the Spaniards, and were encouraged to render a diſaſtrous tale more diſaſtrous; they were taught to believe, that if they made good their allegations, the miniſter who had tamely ſuffered ſuch oppreſſions would be removed, and that his ſucceſſors would act with ſuch vigour as to force the king of Spain to indemnify them for their loſſes and ſufferings *.

Numerous petitions.

Examination of witneſſes.

The captains and ſeamen who appeared at the bar of the houſe, gave the moſt exaggerated accounts of the inſults permitted and exerciſed by the Spaniards; and many related the moſt incredible

* Tindal.

dible tales of horror, which were implicitly believed, almoſt in proportion to their abſurdity. Chapter 5r. 1738.

Among thoſe who were examined, and whoſe ſtory ſeemed to make the deepeſt impreſſion, was one Jenkins: This man was captain of the Rebecca, a trading veſſel; he ſailed for Jamaica in the beginning of 1731, and was boarded by a guarda-coſta, and treated with much inſult and indignity. In the account which was given at the time, by the periodical papers and the pamphlets of oppoſition, the Spaniſh captain is reported to have put the men to the torture, to have hanged up Jenkins three times, once with the cabin boy at his feet, and then to have cut off one of his ears, and bid him carry it to his king. On his arrival in England, Jenkins is ſaid to have gone to court, and laid his caſe before the king, and as ſome compenſation for his treatment, or to pacify him, to have been appointed captain of an Eaſt Indiaman *. Caſe of Jenkins.

This ridiculous ſtory, which Burke juſtly calls, "The *Fable* of Jenkins' ears," ſeems to have made little impreſſion at the time, but it was now revived with additional circumſtances of cruelty and inſult; and Jenkins was produced at the bar of the houſe of commons, to give an account of a tranſaction which had happened ſeven years before †. March 16.

According

* Gentleman's Magazine for 1731. Craftſman.

† It was poſitively aſſerted in the contemporary publications, that Jenkins was examined at the bar of the houſe of commons, and gave the evidence mentioned in the text, and it is generally admitted as a fact; yet it is remarkable that no traces of his evidence are to be found in

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According to contemporary accounts, after relating the tranſaction, with many additional circumſtance of inſult and barbarity, he diſplayed the ear, which he had preſerved, as ſome aſſert, in a box, and others in a bottle, aſſerting, that after *tearing* it off, the Spaniard had ſaid to him, "Carry it to your king, and tell his majeſty that if he were preſent I would ſerve him in the ſame manner." His evidence is mentioned as a model of *noble ſimplicity*. One point, in particular, was oſtentatiouſly circulated. Being aſked by a member what he thought when he found himſelf in the hands of ſuch a barbarian, he replied, "I recommended my ſoul to God, and my cauſe to my country." Theſe words, and the diſplay of his ear, *which, wrapt up in cotton, he always carried about him*, filled the houſe with indignation.

Clamours of the people.

The effect of this ridiculous ſtory * on the nation

in the Journals. The whole that is mentioned in the Journals are the two following paſſages:

16th March. "Ordered, That Captain Robert Jenkins do attend this houſe immediately."

17th March. "Ordered, That Captain Robert Jenkins do attend, on Tueſday morning next, the Committee of the whole houſe, to whom the petition of divers merchants, planters, and others, trading to, and intereſted in, the Britiſh plantations in America, in behalf of themſelves, and many others, is referred." But on Tueſday the 21ſt, there is no farther mention of Jenkins.

* See Gentleman's Magazine for July 1736. Where it is ſaid, that the *Spaniſh* Captain was a Lilliputian, *(Engliſh)* Renegado.—London Magazine.—Chandler.—Smollet, vol. 3. p. 19.—Belſham, vol. 2. p. 3.—Bryan Edwards's Hiſtory of the Britiſh Weſt Indies, vol. 1. p. 144. Voltaire, who never ſpoils a good ſtory in the telling, ſays, "Le capitaine Eſpagnol avait ſaiſi le vaiſſeau de Jenkins, mis l'equipage aux fers, *fendu le nez et coupé les oreilles au portier.* En cet etat Jenkins ſe preſenta au parlement, &c." Hiſtoire de la Guerre de 1741.

Pope has thus ludicrouſly mentioned the incident:

"The Spaniards own they did a waggiſh thing,
"Who cropt our ears, and ſent them to the king."

In

tion at large, was proportionate to the impreſſion of horror and vengeance it created in the houſe of commons. It was made the vehicle of popular frenzy, and ſo highly inflamed the public mind, that Pulteney declared in parliament, the very name of Jenkins would raiſe volunteers. Chapter 51. 1738.

When the nation was irritated by theſe exaggerated accounts and unwarrantable artifices, to the higheſt degree, the buſineſs was reſumed by the commons. On the 30th of March, alderman Perry ſubmitted to a committee of the whole houſe, a report which was calculated to augment the general indignation. After the examinations of ſeveral witneſſes, Murray, afterwards earl of Mansfield, was heard as counſel for the petition, and ſupported, with unuſual eloquence, the juſtice of the complaints. Report of the Committee. March 30.

Pulteney then roſe, and in a ſpeech of great length, ſpirit, and perſpicuity; expatiated on the amazing inſtances of cruelty, barbarity, and injuſtice, proved at the bar to have been exerciſed on the king's ſubjects; he ſtated the rights of the Britiſh nation, which had been controverted and infringed Pulteney's Motion.

In ſpite of theſe authorities, I am inclined to give credit to the ſuggeſtion of Tindal, "that Jenkins *loſt his ear, or part of his ear, on another occaſion,* and pretended it had been cut off by the crew of a guarda coſta," vol. 20. p. 372. It would be unjuſt to the Spaniards not to mention, in this place, a counter ſtory, which was no leſs believed in Spain than the "fable of Jenkins's ears" in England. "Un Capitaine Anglois, après avoir, par un trait de perfidie, et ſous pretexte de commerce, invité deux gentilſhommes Eſpagnols à bord de ſon vaiſſeau, les laiſſa ſans manger pendant deux jours, pour leur extorquer une rançon; mais, comme cet expédient ne lui reuſſit pas, il coupa à l'un des deux les oreilles et le nez, et le força, le couteau ſur le gorge, de les manger; procédé, qui, ſans contredit, mettoit les Eſpagnols en droit d'uſer de repréſailles; auſſi, en uſèrent ils à la rigueur." Hiſtoire du Miniſtère du chevalier Robert Walpole, tom. 3, p. 408.

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infringed by the Spaniards, and on which he propoſed to found his motion; the right of free navigation to every part of the American ſeas, provided the ſhips do not touch at any ports poſſeſſed by the Spaniards; the right of carrying all ſorts of goods, merchandiſe, or effects, from one part of the Britiſh dominions to the other; to cut logwood in the bay of Campeachy, and to gather ſalt on the iſland of Tortuga. He concluded, by propoſing reſolutions, calculated to aſſert theſe rights in the moſt unequivocal and ſpecific manner.

Walpole's amendment.

The miniſter ſaw and appreciated the deep impreſſion which the ſpeech had made upon the houſe, and the manner in which he anſwered it, plainly ſhewed the embarraſſment under which he laboured. He ſaid, he did not pretend to call in queſtion any of the rights and privileges which the honourable gentleman had been pleaſed to enumerate; this nation had an indiſputable title to them, no Britiſh ſubject would pretend to controvert any one of them; and he ſhould be as zealous for defending them as the honourable gentleman himſelf. But though ſuch was his opinion, yet he would not agree that they ought to be vindicated and aſſerted by the houſe in the manner now propoſed, becauſe no Britiſh ſubject could call them in queſtion; and any reſolutions made by that houſe would not bind foreign powers. He next contended, that the paſſing of ſuch reſolutions would be not only unneceſſary but prejudicial. For although theſe rights were

ſecured by the law of nations, or by ſolemn treaties, yet they had never been explicitly acknowledged by Spain, excepting in ſuch general terms, and by ſuch general words, as only conveyed an implied conceſſion, in the ſame manner as we poſſeſſed Jamaica. But as theſe general words were as ſecure and indiſputable as the moſt expreſs declaration, he entreated the houſe not to paſs any reſolutions which would preclude the miniſters from accepting any ſuch general acknowledgments and conceſſions. The reſolutions propoſed would cramp the negotiations, now carrying on; if Spain did not accede to the ſpecific terms, it would occaſion a rupture between the two nations, and render peace unattainable, until one of the parties was wholly ſubdued. It would be as eaſy, he ſaid, to force them to ſign a carte blanche, as to compel them to make ſuch particular conceſſions as were mentioned in the reſolutions; and as the rights in diſpute with Spain might be as fully ſecured by general words in a future treaty as by particular declarations, he ſaw no reaſon for precluding the poſſibility of ſuch a treaty, which might attain all the ends propoſed by the reſolutions, and avoid all their inconveniences. Chapter 51. 1738.

"For this reaſon," he ſaid, "I ſhall be againſt our coming to any peremptory reſolutions, with reſpect to any of the particular rights the Spaniards now pretend to conteſt; but I ſhall moſt readily agree to any motion that can be propoſed, for ſhewing it to be our opinion, that our merchants

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chants have fully proved their loſſes, and that the depredations that have been committed are contrary to the law of nations, contrary to the treaties ſubſiſting between the two crowns; in ſhort, that they are every thing bad, and without the leaſt pretence or colour of juſtice. This, I ſay, I ſhall moſt willingly agree to, becauſe I think the petitioners have fully proved the allegations of their petition; I think they have fully proved, that the ſubjects of this kingdom have met with ſuch treatment from the Spaniſh guarda coſtas, and governors in America, as deſerves the higheſt reſentment. But ſtill, I think, if proper ſatisfaction and full reparation can be obtained by peaceable means, we ought not to involve the nation in a war, from the event of which we have a great deal to fear; and the utmoſt we can hope for from the moſt uninterrupted ſucceſs, is a proper ſatisfaction for paſt injuries, and a proper ſecurity againſt our meeting with any ſuch hereafter, both which we are bound to think there are ſtill hopes of gaining by negotiation; becauſe, if it had been otherwiſe, his majeſty would certainly have acquainted us with it, and have deſired us to provide for obtaining by force, what he ſaw was not to be otherwiſe obtained *."

He concluded by offering an amendment, which adopted only the firſt ſentence of the propoſed reſolutions, "That it is the natural and undoubted right of Britiſh ſubjects to ſail with their ſhips on any part of the ſeas of America, to and from any part

* Chandler.

part of his majeſty's dominions." After this ſentence the miniſter propoſed to inſert, "That the freedom of navigation and commerce, which the ſubjects of Great Britain have an undoubted right to by the law of nations, and which is not in the leaſt reſtrained by virtue of any ſubſiſting treaties, has been greatly interrupted by the Spaniards, under pretences altogether groundleſs and unjuſt. That before and ſince the execution of the treaty of Seville, and the declaration made by the crown of Spain purſuant thereunto, for the ſatisfaction and ſecurity of the commerce of Great Britain, many unjuſt ſeizures and captures have been made, and great depredations committed by the Spaniards, which have been attended with many inſtances of unheard of cruelty and barbarity. That the frequent applications made to the court of Spain for procuring juſtice and ſatisfaction to his majeſty's injured ſubjects, for bringing the offenders to condign puniſhment, and for preventing the like abuſes in future, have proved vain and ineffectual; and the ſeveral orders or cedulas, granted by the king of Spain, for reſtitution and reparation of great loſſes ſuſtained, by the unlawful and unwarrantable ſeizures and captures made by the Spaniards, have been diſobeyed by the Spaniſh governors, or totally evaded and eluded. And that theſe violences and depredations have been carried on to the great loſs and damage of the ſubjects of Great Britain trading to America, and in direct violation of the treaties ſubſiſting between the two crowns *."

Chapter 51. 1738.

Theſe

* Chandler, p. 204.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. Reſolutions of the Commons.

Theſe amendments occaſioned a long and vehement debate, which, according to the opinion of a contemporary author, "is groſsly miſrepreſented in the parliamentary collections of that time. The gentlemen in oppoſition had not ſtudied the term of contraband goods with ſufficient preciſion, and they confounded them with illicit goods. The difference between the intention and meaning of the treaty concluded with Spain in 1667, and that of 1670, was not ſufficiently defined; the former relating to the European commerce, and the latter reſtricted ſolely to the American. Neither was there ſufficient foundation for a houſe of parliament to aſſert the right which the Engliſh had of cutting logwood in the bay of Campeachy, and it was certain that that right had not only been warmly conteſted by the Spaniards in former negotiations, but had been tacitly given up by ſome of the Engliſh miniſters, and the whole of it was abſolutely inconſiſtent with the intereſt of the South Sea Company. It was maintained by Sir Robert Walpole and his friends, during the courſe of the debate, that the reſolutions moved for by him, contained all that could be reaſonably expected from Spain at that time; and that whatever claims the Engliſh had to lands in the province of Jucutan, or to cut logwood in the bay of Campeachy, or to other privileges, either of poſſeſſion or navigation, it could not be affected or weakened by the amendment; which, after a long and ſharp debate *, was carried without a diviſion.

When

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 374.

When the reſolution, amended in the committee, was reported to the houſe by alderman Perry, the minority propoſed that it ſhould be recommitted, but the motion was negatived by 224 againſt 163 *. Then alderman Perry propoſed, and carried an addreſs, "beſeeching the king to uſe his endeavours to obtain effectual relief for his injured ſubjects, and to convince the court of Spain that he could no longer ſuffer ſuch conſtant and repeated inſults and injuries, to the diſhonour of his crown, and to the ruin of his trading ſubjects; aſſuring the king, that ſhould his friendly inſtances for procuring juſtice, and for the future ſecurity of their navigation and commerce, which his people have an undoubted right to by treaties and the law of nations, fail of ſucceſs, the houſe would effectually ſupport his majeſty in taking ſuch meaſures as honour and juſtice ſhall make it neceſſary to purſue †."

Chapter 51. 1738.

The great object of the miniſter in moving his amendment, was to prevent any mention of not ſearching ſhips, which he well knew would never be agreed to by Spain. But he had no reaſon to boaſt of his victory: for on the ſame day, the houſe of lords, after a long debate, voted reſolutions much ſtronger than thoſe which paſſed the commons, and what rendered this circumſtance more extraordinary was, that the miniſterial party ſeemed to have almoſt adopted the arguments of the oppoſition, and to have employed all the violent expreſſions of thoſe

Reſolutions of the Lords.

* Journals. † Ibid.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. thoſe who wiſhed to bring on a war. The lords not only aſſerted the undoubted right of Great Britain to navigate on the American ſeas, but alſo "to carry all ſorts of goods and merchandiſe, or effects, from one part of his majeſty's dominions to any other part thereof, and that no goods, being ſo carried, are, by any treaty ſubſiſting between the crowns of Great Britain and Spain, to be deemed or taken as contraband or prohibited goods; and that the ſearching of ſuch ſhips, on the open ſeas, under pretence of their carrying contraband or prohibited goods, is a violation and infraction of the treaties ſubſiſting between the two crowns *."

Theſe reſolutions were formed into an addreſs, promiſing the moſt effectual ſupport, ſhould the king's inſtances fail of having a due effect on the crown of Spain.

The king ſanctioned theſe ſtrong reſolutions by a no leſs ſtrong reply: "I am ſenſibly touched with the many hardſhips and injuries ſuſtained by my trading ſubjects in America, from the cruelties and unjuſt depredations of the Spaniards. You may be aſſured of my care to procure ſatisfaction and reparation for the loſſes they have already ſuffered, and ſecurity for the freedom of navigation for the future; and to maintain to my people the full enjoyment of all the rights to which they are entitled by treaty and the law of nations. I doubt not but I ſhall have your concurrence for the ſupport of ſuch meaſures as may be neceſſary for that purpoſe †."

As

* Lords' Debates. † Tindal, vol. 20. p. 377. Lords' Debates.

As the public mind became more and more exasperated againſt Spain, and as the puſillanimity of the miniſter became the conſtant object of popular invective, the oppoſition determined to exert one great effort to bring on immediate hoſtilities, and to preclude the miniſter from availing himſelf of the interval which was ſtill left open for negotiation. Pulteney, who conducted this whole buſineſs with great addreſs and ability, was the organ of the minority. He moved to bring in a bill under the plauſible title of effectually ſecuring and encouraging the trade to America. It was to revive part of two acts, paſſed in the reign of queen Anne, and in effect, if carried, it would have amounted to a declaration of war, and tended to involve the country with all the commercial nations in Europe. The intention of the act was, to give the property of all prizes taken from the Spaniards, after a declaration of war, to the officers and ſeamen preſent in the action; head money, or £. 5, for every Spaniard made priſoner at ſea, was to be granted to the ſailors; and the property of all places taken was to veſted, by the king's patent, in the captors.

Chapter 51. 1738.

Bill for ſecuring trade.

May 5.

During its progreſs the miniſter attacked it with great ſtrength of argument. He endeavoured to ſhew its impropriety at this juncture, and pointed out the injuſtice of particular parts. On the firſt clauſe he obſerved, "That as the bill then ſtood, if hoſtilities were immediately to commence againſt Spain, and a ſquadron of Engliſh ſhips were to take the whole Plate fleet or flotilla of the Spaniards, with all their regiſter ſhips, it would become the

Oppoſed by Walpole.

May 12.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. property of the Engliſh ſeamen, though it was notorious that not one-fifth part of that treaſure, in reality, belonged to the Spaniards, but was the property of the French, the Dutch, and other trading nations of Europe."

To the clauſe for granting head money he made no objection; he thought it juſt and reaſonable that the ſailors in caſe of a war ſhould have ſuch encouragement, and declared that he would willingly concur in any motion for that purpoſe.

The third clauſe he conceived to be highly dangerous, becauſe it would effectually preclude the concluſion of a ſafe and honourable pacification; as in all negotiations for peace, ſome places on both ſides are uſually reſtored to facilitate the accommodation, which could not be effected if the king, by letters patent, ſhould part with the property to private owners. In oppoſition to this clauſe he urged, that the bill, if paſſed in the preſent form, would be attended with the total ruin of the Britiſh commerce in Europe. It muſt give ſuch an alarm to the French for their property, which is even greater than that of the Spaniards on board of the galleons, that they would not heſitate taking part with Spain, and joining their whole naval force to convoy the Spaniſh merchant fleet to the ports of Europe.

"But a more material conſideration ſtill remained: moſt of the French, Dutch, and Daniſh property at ſea, was inſured in England or Holland in time of peace, and therefore the loſs, in fact, muſt fall upon the Britiſh and Dutch inſurers, as they

could have no pretext to indemnify the French and other nations for the loſſes they would ſuſtain; ſo that the bill, if paſſed into a law, might ruin the Dutch as well as the Britiſh inſurers."

He deſired the houſe to conſider, in ſuch an event, what muſt be the caſe of the Britiſh merchants then reſiding in Spain, their perſons, their ſhips, and their properties, all which the Spaniards would certainly ſequeſter. "What muſt the Dutch," ſaid he, "think of ſuch a bill? Or what power in Europe can be our hearty friend, ſhould it, at this time, paſs into a law*."

In the courſe of the debates many perſonal reflections, highly injurious to his character, were caſt on the miniſter, and a bitter altercation aroſe between him and Pulteney, who was loudly called to order, and obliged to acknowledge, that the warmth of his temper had tranſported him to uſe ſome unguarded expreſſions, for which he teſtified his concern.

In anſwer to thoſe who alledged he was afraid of a war, becauſe peace was his only ſafety, Walpole obſerved, "It is but a mean excuſe for a miniſter, when a wrong ſtep is made in government, that he is not accountable for the events of meaſures that never were adviſed by him, and in which he was overruled by his ſuperiors. I have always diſdained thoſe mean ſubterfuges; and with what face can I appear again in this houſe, if full and ample ſatisfaction is not made, or at leaſt if we do not do our utmoſt

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 369 and 370.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. utmoſt to obtain it, either by fair and peaceable means, or by exerting all our ſtrength, in caſe a war becomes neceſſary. If my country ſhould call me to account, I would willingly take upon me the blame of every ſtep that has been made by the government, ſince I had the honour to enter into the adminiſtration. As to the common notion of a miniſter's being afraid to enter upon a war, I do not underſtand upon what it can be grounded. For my part, I could never ſee any cauſe, either from reaſon or from my own experience, to imagine that a miniſter is not as ſafe in time of war, as in time of peace. Nay, if we are to judge by reaſon alone, it is the intereſt of a miniſter, conſcious of any miſmanagement, that there ſhould be a war; becauſe by a war, the eyes of the public are diverted from examining into his conduct; nor is he accountable for the bad ſucceſs of a war, as he is for that of an adminiſtration*."

Thrown out, May 15. The Bill was negatived by a large majority†.

Prorogation of parliament. A few days after this debate, the ſeſſion was cloſed by prorogation.

Thus was concluded this difficult ſeſſion, in which the miniſter contrived to place the diſputes with Spain on ſuch a footing as to give an opening to an amicable negotiation, during the courſe of which, he truſted that a due mixture of vigour, moderation, and forbearance, would induce the court of Madrid to agree to ſuch conditions, as would ſatisfy the Engliſh nation, reſtore harmony, and prevent a rupture. The reſolutions of the houſe

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 369 and 370. † Journals.

houſe of commons were tranſmitted to Mr. Keene, to lay before the king of Spain; letters of repriſals were iſſued to the merchants; a ſquadron of ten ſhips of the line ſailed for the Mediterranean, under the command of admiral Haddock; many ſingle ſhips were ſent to America, and the infant colony of Georgia was ſupplied with troops and ſtores for reſiſting the Spaniards, who threatened to invade it from Saint Auguſtine. Theſe precautions for defence and attack, were obviouſly calculated to give weight to the negotiation with Spain, and they had their due effect.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-SECOND;

1738—1739.

Difficulties attending the Negotiation with Spain.—Articles of the Convention.—Proteſt of Spain.—Parliamentary Proceedings.—Debates on the Convention.

THE remainder of the year was paſſed in attempts to adjuſt the differences between Spain and England. Negotiations with Spain.

There never was any negotiation which commenced with more unfavourable appearances, and was attended with greater difficulties. Theſe difficulties principally aroſe from the punctilious and inflexible ſpirit of the Spaniſh court, the high expectations of the Engliſh nation, the diſcordant reſolutions of the lords and commons, and the diſ-

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

putes between the crown of Spain and the South Sea company.

The firſt difficulty aroſe from the Spaniſh court, tremblingly alive to all diſcuſſions on points which related to their American poſſeſſions; for although Philip appeared well inclined to give full ſatisfaction for paſt depredations, and full ſecurity for freedom of navigation, which did not promote the illicit commerce, carried on with his ſubjects in America, or which did not infringe on his ſovereignty; yet he could not be prevailed on to grant any ſpecific propoſition for not *ſearching* ſhips, either in the open ſeas, or hovering on their coaſts, under the pretence of trading to and from the Britiſh plantations.

The difficulty of managing ſo capricious a court, was increaſed by the high expectations of the Engliſh nation. The people, fired with enthuſiaſm, and inflamed by exaggerated accounts of Spaniſh depredations, wildly and imperiouſly clamoured for redreſs. They laid their demands of reparation at a very high rate; they required ample ſatisfaction for paſt injuries, and full ſecurity againſt future depredations, which ſecurity was made to conſiſt in an explicit renunciation of the right of *ſearching* ſhips, in all places except the Spaniſh ports and ſeas.

Walpole, well aware of the inflexibility of the Spaniſh court on this delicate queſtion, had contrived to word the reſolutions, which paſſed the commons, in ſuch a manner as to omit the mention of the word *Search*. He had avoided, with great prudence,

dence, all ſpecific claims, and confined the expreſſions of the houſe to general topics. But this deſign had been fruſtrated by the reſolutions of the lords, which reduced the queſtion to a ſpecific propoſition, and poſitively declared the illegality of *ſearching* Engliſh veſſels on the open ſeas, and trading to and from the different parts of the Britiſh dominions. Theſe diſcordant reſolutions naturally produced numerous embarraſſments, and would have occaſioned inſuperable obſtructions, had not the miniſter reſolved to adhere to the deciſion of the commons. Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739.

But the negotiation encountered the greateſt difficulty from the diſputes of the crown of Spain with the South Sea company. The origin and progreſs of that company, and the fatal conſequences of the project of commerce to South America, have been already related*.

Before the aſſiento treaty, a very advantageous, though contraband trade, was carried on from Jamaica to the Spaniſh colonies. The Spaniſh governors connived at the introduction of negroes, and the importation of Engliſh manufactures. The profit of this traffic was certain and expeditious, and was ſtill greater, becauſe it was not attended with the payment of any duties to the king of Spain, or other incumbrances.

But this branch of traffic was evidently diminiſhed by the aſſiento treaty. It then became the intereſt of Spain, for the ſake of the duties, as well as of the South Sea company, who wiſhed to monopolize

* Chapter 19.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

monopolize the trade to the Spaniſh Weſt Indies, to ſtop this commercial intercourſe, and many remonſtrances were made for that purpoſe to government, as well as to the Spaniſh court, by the directors, who conſidered all Britiſh ſubjects, trading to the Spaniſh ſettlements, as interlopers upon their province. Hence diſputes frequently aroſe between the South Sea company, and the traders of Jamaica; and the directors, by their remonſtrances, often occaſioned the ſeizure and confiſcation of veſſels which were taken in the act of carrying on an illicit trade, or with illicit goods on board. The court of Spain made a merit with the Britiſh government, of having endeavoured to check a commerce which was prejudicial to ſo great a public company*; at the ſame time the Britiſh traders urged the moſt violent complaints againſt the guarda coſtas, for making theſe ſeizures, which they termed illegal and unjuſt.

The aſſiento treaty ſtipulated the payment of certain duties for the introduction of negroes, and other articles of trade. Theſe had been always paid to the Spaniſh officers, according to the rate of exchange between Great Britain and Spain, and received without complaint. But as Spain had, ſeveral years before this period, given currency to another ſpecies of dollars, a claim was now made of the difference between the two ſpecies of dollars, ever ſince the new regulation, under the denomination of arrears. In addition to this, another demand was made, for the fourth of the profits acquired

* Tindal. vol. 20. p. 433.

quired by the annual ſhip, which was due to the king of Spain. On the other ſide, the company claimed reparation for the damages ſuſtained by the ſeizure of their effects in 1718 and 1727, before war had been declared between England and Spain. Chapter 5a. 1738 to 1739.

In the midſt of theſe difficulties, the miniſter exerted all his influence, at home and abroad, to ſettle the differences in a ſatisfactory manner, or to refer the ſettlement to the deciſion of plenipotentiaries, by which means farther time would be obtained to prevent the commencement of hoſtilities. A double negotiation was opened, between the miniſters and Geraldino in London, and between Keene and la Quadra at Madrid, which had no immediate communication with each other. Walpole wholly influenced the negotiation at London; but he could only modify that which was carrying on at Madrid.

Geraldino having delivered a meſſage, importing that his maſter was inclined to enter into meaſures for conciliating paſt differences, and agreeing upon a method for preventing them in future; an account was ſtated of the demands on each ſide, which, after ſome difficulties, was reduced to a balance of £. 140,000, in favour of England, and ſent to Mr. Keene to be ratified. But when this agreement was tranſmitted, the court of Madrid refuſed to ratify it, declaring that Geraldino had ſurpaſſed his powers.

Foiled in this attempt, the miniſter modified and tempered the violent orders ſent from the duke

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. duke of Newcaſtle to Mr. Keene, and exhorted him to uſe every effort with de la Quadra, and to repreſent the neceſſity of adjuſting the differences amicably.

This pacific ſpirit fortunately prevailed in the counſels of England; and due conſideration was paid to the honour, jealouſy, and even to the prejudices of Spain. Keene ſeconded the pacific efforts of the miniſter with great addreſs and ability, and finally overcame the dilatorineſs, the punctilios, and the repugnance of the Spaniſh court.

Articles of the convention. A convention was accordingly ſettled on the following baſis: "That within ſix weeks, two plenipotentiaries ſhould meet at Madrid, to regulate the reſpective pretenſions of the two crowns, with relation to the trade and navigation in America and Europe, and to the limits of Florida and Carolina, as well as the other points which remained to be adjuſted, according to former treaties. That the plenipotentiaries ſhould finiſh their conferences within eight months: That in the mean time, no progreſs ſhould be made in the fortifications of Florida and Carolina. That his Catholic majeſty ſhould, within four months from the day of exchanging the ratifications, pay to the king of Great Britain, the ſum of ninety-five thouſand pounds, as a balance due to Great Britain, after deduction made of the demands of Spain. That this ſum ſhould be employed for the ſatisfaction, diſcharge, and payment of the claims of Britiſh ſubjects upon the crown of Spain. That this reciprocal diſcharge, however, ſhould not extend

or

or relate to the accounts and differences which subsisted between the crown of Spain and the assiento company, nor to any private contracts between either of the two crowns, or their ministers, with the subjects of the other; or between the subjects of each nation respectively." Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739.

In all his conferences with Mr. Keene, de la Quadra had insisted, that £.68,000 was due to his master from the South Sea company; and had declared that the convention would not be ratified, unless that money was paid. Keene represented, that the interests of the company, and those of England, were distinct considerations; and that the convention was a settlement of accounts between the two nations, the other, a private transaction between the king of Spain and the company. He said, that if it was proved that £.68,000 was owing, the money should be paid. This la Quadra considered as a positive promise, that the £.68,000 should be liquidated before the execution of the articles of the convention. Accordingly, at the very moment when the convention was to be ratified, the Spanish minister delivered to Keene, a declaration or protest, declaring, in due form, that the king of Spain reserved to himself the right of suspending the assiento treaty, should the company not pay within a short time the £.68,000. Under the validity and force of this protest, and that, upon the firm supposition that it would not be eluded on any motive or pretext, he was ready to sign the convention. Keene seeing the obstinacy of the Spanish court, knowing Protest of Spain.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

ing the anxiety of the Britiſh miniſter to receive the ratification before the meeting of parliament, and aware, that unleſs he accepted the proteſt, the negotiation would be inſtantly broken off, conſented to receive it, though without admitting the fact it aſſumed, and ſimply to be tranſmitted to the conſideration of the Britiſh cabinet. Clogged with this obſtruction, the convention was finally ſigned at Madrid, and tranſmitted by a courier to London, who did not arrive till the 15th of January.

Agitation of the public.

The public mind was agitated to a degree of frenzy, and their expectations to a pitch which no reaſonable conceſſion could gratify. Beſides puniſhment inflicted on the Spaniſh captains, and others who had committed depredations, they required, that the Spaniards ſhould poſitively diſclaim all right to ſearch Britiſh ſhips in the American ſeas, and diſavow their right to Georgia, and a part of South Carolina; that they ſhould pay £. 340,000 as a compenſation for the captures and confiſcations, to diſcharge the balance of the account, due to the South Sea company, for the effects confiſcated, which amounted to no leſs a ſum than a million ſterling; and it was ſaid, that if the nation ſhould not receive ſatisfaction on theſe particulars, no juſtice was procured, and no ſecurity obtained. In the midſt of theſe clamours, every eye was directed to the meeting of parliament, which was to aſſemble on the 18th of January. But the public were diſappointed: on that day the parliament was farther prorogued un-

til the firſt of February, and it was known that the difficulty in adjuſting the diſputes with Spain, had been the cauſe of this prorogation. Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739.

On the firſt of February the parliament aſſembled. The ſpeech from the throne mentioned the ratification of the convention. Meeting of parliament.

"It is now a great ſatisfaction to me, that I am able to acquaint you, that the meaſures I have purſued have had ſo good an effect, that a convention is concluded and ſigned between me and the king of Spain, whereby, upon conſideration had of the demands on both ſides, that prince has obliged himſelf to make reparation to my ſubjects for their loſſes, by a certain ſtipulated payment: and plenipotentiaries are therein named and appointed for regulating, within a limited time, all the grievances and abuſes which have hitherto interrupted our commerce and navigation in the American ſeas; and for ſettling all matters and diſputes, in ſuch a manner, as may for the future prevent and remove all new cauſes and pretences of complaint, by a ſtrict obſervance of our mutual treaties, and a juſt regard to the rights and privileges belonging to each other. I will order the convention, and the ſeparate articles, to be laid before you. King's ſpeech.

"It hath been my principal care to make uſe of the confidence you repoſed in me, in this critical and doubtful conjuncture, with no other view but the general and laſting benefit of my kingdoms; and if all the ends which are to be hoped for, even from ſucceſsful arms, can be attained

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tained without plunging the nation into a war, it muſt be thought, by all reaſonable and unprejudiced perſons, the moſt deſirable event *."

Proceedings.

The motion for an addreſs encountered violent oppoſition in both houſes. In the lords, however, it paſſed without a diviſion, by the interpoſition of the earl of Scarborough and the duke of Argyle, who, though they declared their diſapprobation of that thing called a convention, yet conceived it would be irregular to mention it till it was laid before them, and thought that unanimity was highly neceſſary at the preſent juncture.

In the commons, an addreſs being moved for as uſual, in the terms of the ſpeech, Sir William Wyndham objected to all expreſſions which might appear an approbation of the convention, and therefore propoſed omitting the paragraph which alluded to it, and merely to thank the king for his ſpeech, and to aſſure him that the houſe would grant the neceſſary ſupplies, and to endeavour to avoid all heats and animoſities.

Sir Robert Walpole, in a long and able ſpeech, defended the conduct of miniſters in the negociation with Spain. He declared that the accommodation was attended with all the advantages which the moſt ſucceſsful warfare could have procured. He ſhewed, under the exiſting circumſtances, it was more prudent and beneficial to avoid extremities; that all the commercial nations, even France itſelf, did not object to the claim of ſearching and ſeizing their ſhips, when taken in

* Journals.

in the act of carrying on illegal trade. He then extolled the convention, with a wantonness of praise not usual with him, and declared he thought it his peculiar happiness, that the nation would deem the influence he possessed, the principal means of its ratification; and that he should not be sorry if it was considered as a measure entirely his own. He finally observed, that it was unfair to decide on the merits or demerits of the convention, before it was known; that in a few days it would be submitted to the house, when a candid discussion would take place; and that as there was no reason to suppose it contrary to the known interest of the nation, he saw no ground for opposing the address. He reminded the house, that the last session he declared himself answerable for the measures pursued by government, while he was minister; he was prepared to make good his promise; all he desired was a candid hearing, and that he hoped would not be denied. He concluded, by opposing the amendment, and supporting the original address.

He was answered by Lyttleton, Sir John Hynde Cotton, and Sir John Barnard, who took notice that the speech itself was most absurdly worded, because it stated, that plenipotentiaries were to regulate the grievances and abuses that had happened to the British subjects, from the insolence and cruelty of the Spaniards: now to regulate abuses, he said, implied a continuance of them, but only under another form *.

The

* Tindal, vol. 20, p. 395.

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The motion for the addreſs was carried by 234 againſt 141 *; a majority which inſpired the miniſter with unfounded hopes of a quiet and eaſy ſeſſion, for on the contrary, every meaſure was adopted, and every expedient reſorted to for the purpoſe of harraſſing adminiſtration, and throwing an odium on the meaſures of government.

Almoſt the only queſtion which was not reſiſted, was the propoſal for employing 12,000 ſeamen. The motion for 18,000 land forces was oppoſed, and a reduction to 12,000, as in the laſt ſeſſion, moved by Shippen, but negatived by 253 againſt 183 †.

Feb. 14.

Convention referred to a committee.

General diſſatisfaction.

Mean while the convention had been laid before the houſe, and referred to a committee, and its contents having been communicated to the public, a general ferment prevailed in the nation, and a violent outcry was raiſed againſt the conditions. One article, agreed to by the Engliſh commiſſaries, which gave much umbrage, and had a great effect in irritating the public mind, was the claim of £. 60,000, for the ſhips taken by admiral Byng, off the coaſt of Sicily, in 1718. The demand was founded on an article in the peace of Madrid, made under the adminiſtration of Sunderland, which promiſed reſtitution, and was confirmed by the treaty of Seville. This ſtipulation had never been performed; the claim on the ſide of the Spaniards ſtill exiſted in its full force, and therefore, though unpopular, was juſt and reaſonable.

Motions

* Journals. Chandler.

† Chandler.

Motions being made by the party in oppoſition, that the petitioners might be heard by counſel, were warmly oppoſed by the miniſterial party, and negatived, after long and warm debates *. A private petition was alſo preſented from the owners of a ſhip taken in 1727, and another upon the capture of the ſhip Sarah, belonging to Briſtol, praying alſo to be heard by counſel. The miniſter juſtly obſerved, that if the proprietors of every capture were to be heard by counſel, the houſe would be ſolely occupied in ſuch affairs, and could not attend to public buſineſs. The queſtion, however, was preſſed, and loſt only by 13 †. This large minority, upon ſo diſputed a point, inſpired the oppoſition with the moſt ſanguine hopes, and encouraged them to perſevere. Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739. Feb. 26.

After various other petitions, both public and private, the convention was firſt taken into conſideration in the houſe of lords. On the 1ſt of March, lord Cholmondeley moved an addreſs, ſimilar to that which was afterwards propoſed in the houſe of commons, by Horace Walpole. After a warm and vigorous conteſt, the addreſs was voted by a majority of 95 againſt 74, and a ſtrong proteſt was made by nine and thirty peers ‡. At the head of thoſe who voted in oppoſition, was the prince of Wales. Feb. 5. Convention approved in the lords.

Notwithſtanding their defeat in the houſe of lords, the oppoſition entertained hopes, that the convention Debated in the commons.

* 242 againſt 207, and 237 againſt 208. Journals.

† 175 to 162, Journals. Tindal, vol. 20, p. 209.

‡ Lords' Debates.

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convention would be disapproved and rejected by the commons. At length, the 6th of March was the day appointed for taking into consideration, the various petitions relating to the convention. The members repaired so early to the house, that 100 had taken their seats before eight in the morning. The public attention was no less powerfully attracted to this important debate, the result of which was expected to decide the fate of the minister. The sixth and seventh were occupied in examining witnesses, and hearing some West India merchants, in support of their petitions.

H. Walpole's speech.

On the 8th, at half past eleven, Horace Walpole, who thoroughly understood the subject, and had drawn up several papers relative to the transaction, opened the debate by a speech of two hours and a half*. He began by expressing his hopes, that in discussing this important question, on which depended the issue of peace or war, gentlemen would lay aside wit and railing accusations; avoid personalities, not mistake a popular outcry for the voice of the people, as distinguished from that of parliament, and would not be biassed by strong assertions without proof. After making a general observation, that in all differences between two nations, an immediate declaration of war ought not to be the first resolution of either, he observed,

* Amongghe Orford Papers, are a few parliamentary memorandums, in the hand writing of Sir Robert Walpole, taken by him during the first debate on the convention. They are minutes of part of Horace Walpole's speech, Sir Thomas Saunderson's, and Mr. Pitt's. Though short and imperfect, they sufficiently prove the general accuracy of the speeches, given by Chandler, on that occasion.

obſerved, that the three great points on which he ſhould reſt the defence of the convention were, firſt, honour; ſecond, ſatisfaction; and third, ſecurity. He then undertook to prove, that the honour of the nation was preſerved, that ſatisfaction had been given for paſt injuries, and ſecurity obtained againſt future grievances.

" As to the firſt poſition, which regards the honour of the nation; I obſerve," he ſaid, " that gentlemen, in diſcuſſing our differences with Spain, are impreſſed with a notion, that the honour of the nation has been ſacrificed. This is a topic on which ſome gentlemen have fondly expatiated. I am no leſs jealous of the national honour than any other gentleman; but true honour is founded on juſtice and humanity, and not on ambition, falſe glory, or intereſt, and I am convinced that this treaty is founded on the former, and not on the latter.

" The differences with Spain aroſe from diſputes on matters of right, or from depredations committed by Spaniſh ſubjects. The matter of right being inconteſtible, and the depredations great and frequent, had intereſt, ambition, or falſe glory been the objects, the king had ſufficient pretence to declare war without having recourſe to amicable means. But as theſe were not his objects, he conſidered the peace and happineſs of his people, as the ſolid foundation of his glory. He made repeated, but ineffectual applications to Spain, to adjuſt the differences in an amicable manner. At length, ſupported by the reſolutions

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. of both houſes during the laſt ſeſſions, he made a peremptory demand, and inſiſted, that unleſs a ſpeedy and categorical anſwer was given, recourſe muſt be had to thoſe extremities which he ſo much wiſhed to avoid. This declaration, and the preparations which accompanied it, had a due effect. The king of Spain agreed to enter upon an immediate diſcuſſion of the rights in diſpute, and to make every juſt compenſation. Hence the king, concluding that there was a probability of accommodating differences, could not, on the principles of juſtice and humanity, commence hoſtilities, or refuſe to accept a preliminary convention, by which ſatisfaction was to be obtained for paſt, and ſecurity againſt future injuries.

"Honour may be ſatisfied by ſubmiſſion, as well as by vindictive juſtice; and public honour differs eſſentially from private honour. The honour of the nation can be injured but by ſome public or national act. When therefore any injury is done, or an affront given by the ſubjects of one ſtate to thoſe of another, the ſtate, whoſe ſubjects have ſuffered injury, ought to apply to the other for ſatisfaction, and ought not to conſider its honour as affected, till the ſtate, whoſe ſubjects committed the inſult, has made the act its own, by refuſing to puniſh the tranſgreſſors, or to make reparation for damages. Let us apply this reaſoning to the preſent ſubject. The Spaniſh depredations have been committed by private ſubjects; application has been made for reparation: The crown promiſes reparation,

* * *

"This

" This method of agreeing to the convention, and ſuſpending hoſtilities, until it could be ſeen what effect it would produce, is not only conſonant to honour and juſtice, but agreeable to the advice given by both houſes of parliament. The addreſſes exhorted the king to uſe his endeavours to obtain effectual relief for his injured ſubjects, and promiſed, if his inſtances ſhould prove ineffectual, to ſupport him in taking ſuch meaſures, as honour and juſtice required. It appears, from the articles of this convention, that the king has obtained ſuch ſatisfaction and ſuch ſecurity as could reaſonably be expected. Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739

" With regard to ſatisfaction for paſt injuries, the mode of reparation is not only finally adjuſted, but the payment of a ſpecific ſum is actually promiſed within a very ſhort time after the exchange of the ratifications. There being mutual demands for damages ſuſtained, it ſeemed neceſſary to ſettle and balance the account: It then appeared, that our demands upon Spain amounted to - - - - - - - - - - - £. 200,000

Thoſe of Spain upon us to - - - £. 60,000

Which made a balance of - - £. 140,000

This the king of Spain offered to pay by aſſignments upon his revenues in America. But as we knew the tediouſneſs and precarioufneſs of that fund, it was propoſed to make an allowance for prompt payment, on the condition of paying the money in a ſhort time at London; the allowance agreed on was £. 45,000, which reduced the ſum due to us to £. 95,000, and this ſum his Catholic

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. majeſty has expreſsly promiſed, by this convention, to pay at London, in four months after the exchange of the ratifications. From hence it appears, that we have not only obtained all the reparation any reaſonable man could expect, but all the reparation we could inſiſt on, with any pretence of juſtice.

" The next great object under conſideration is our future ſecurity. Now it is plain, that ſecurity depends on thoſe matters of right which are now in diſpute, and therefore connot be effectually provided for, until thoſe rights are fully aſcertained. But as this is a diſcuſſion which depends not only on ſeveral diſputable points in the law of nations, but alſo on the nature and tenour of various treaties, and on many facts and local circumſtances, which can only be aſcertained in the Weſt Indies, it was impoſſible to ſettle the buſineſs in a few weeks, or by a preliminary convention. For this reaſon, this diſcuſſion is referred to plenipotentiaries, who are to meet within ſix weeks after the exchange of the ratifications, and muſt finally ſettle the points referred to them within the ſhort term of eight months, which is all that we could expect, and as much as we could, with juſtice or reaſon, deſire.

" On this account the treaty muſt be conſidered as a good preliminary, and ſuch as ought to have been accepted in preference to a war, even had there not been one word in the treaty, which could tend to a preſumption that Spain had relinquiſhed any of the rights which were the objects of diſpute,

diſpute. But this is not the caſe. The principal right exerciſed by Spain, is that of ſearching Britiſh ſhips in the open ſeas, and ſeizing them, if Spaniſh money or merchandiſe are found on board. But this right Spain has renounced in the preſent preliminary, if not by the letter, at leaſt by the ſpirit of the treaty. This right is not *claimed* by Spain, but *exerciſed* only. How then could it be remedied but by conſent, either by a reparation, or by an explanatory treaty? The reparation is actually made, and the treaty is to follow, which is to prevent future aggreſſions.

"The preamble of the convention recites all the grievances complained of, and ſpecifies, *viſiting, ſearching, and taking of veſſels, and ſeizing effects.* It acknowledges them to be of ſuch a nature, *that without future care, they might occaſion an open rupture between the two crowns.* Here then Spain avows, that the ſearching of ſhips is a cauſe of complaint, and ſhe allows it to be a grievance which ought to be remedied. But can the exerciſe of a *juſt right* be deemed a cauſe of complaint? Can it be allowed to be a grievance? And is it not a reaſonable concluſion that Spain, having by the preamble diſclaimed her right, indicates a reſolution to diſclaim it alſo in the definitive treaty.

"But the court of Madrid has not only acknowledged the ſearching of ſhips on the open ſeas, and confiſcating them for having Spaniſh money and effects on board, to be a grievance which ought to be remedied, but they have in ſome meaſure owned it to be wrong. They have allowed

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. lowed it to be an injury, by giving a reparation for all such captures as are proved to have been illegal. Therefore the plenipotentiaries are not to settle the right, not to determine whether it be a grievance or not, for that is allowed; they are to settle, by a definitive treaty, the means to prevent new abuses, and remove the causes of future complaints. But in this their powers are circumscribed. For the regulations which they are to accede to, must be conformable to the existing treaties. This must be settled within a limited time, and must be ratified by the king; so that should the plenipotentiaries adjust the business in such a manner as not to satisfy the country, they may still be not ratified, and we may then have the choice of war or peace.

"The chief question, therefore, now seems to be, whether we ought to go to war, rather than grant a delay of eight months, for giving full satisfaction and absolute security; and I do not think that any man who considers the present situation of Europe, or the present circumstances of this nation, would be for involving the country in a dangerous and expensive war, rather than grant such a delay.

"In considering this question, I trust that gentlemen will not pretend to decide from general declamations on peace and war, but reflect that the true state of the question rests on the specific circumstances of the present moment, and the dangers of war, as it concerns the present times, conditions, and trade. War, in all situations, even with

with the faireſt proſpect of ſucceſs, is always dangerous and deſtructive to a trading nation; it is much more dangerous when the event is doubtful. Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739.

"It follows from theſe premiſes, that if the ſituation of Europe was favourable to us, and if our circumſtances were alſo advantageous, we ought not wantonly to engage in war. How much more ought this evil to be avoided, when the ſtate of Europe wears a moſt unfavourable aſpect, and our internal ſituation is unpromiſing.

"France is powerful, and governed by wiſe counſels, tranquil at home, and reſpected abroad. Their ſovereign is bound by intereſt, as well as by the ties of blood, to aſſiſt the king of Spain, if he is attacked, and in all probability, a treaty of alliance is now forming, and perhaps concluded, between the two crowns. If we declare war againſt Spain, we muſt therefore expect that France will take part with Spain againſt us; and though I have ſo good an opinion of my country, as to think we are more than a match for the one, and at leaſt an equal match for the other, yet I cannot be ſo vain as to imagine we are an equal match for both; and conſequently, I muſt think we have reaſon to be afraid of ſinking under the burthen, unleſs we can obtain aſſiſtance from ſome of the other great powers."

He then took a view of the ſtate of Europe, which he deſcribed as ſo ſituated, that England was without a ſingle ally, who was either willing or capable of affording aſſiſtance. The Emperor involved

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. involved in the misfortunes of the Turkiſh war, and under the direction of France; the Dutch weak, wavering, and loaded with debts; Sweden wholly governed by France; Denmark and Ruſſia at too great a diſtance, even if inclined, to act in our favour; the king of Naples diſpoſed to take part with the other branches of the houſe of Bourbon, and the king of Sardinia incapable of coming forward ſingly to our aſſiſtance.

"This being the ſtate of Europe," he continued, "would it not be the height of folly and madneſs to engage in hoſtilities, if we can with honour and ſecurity avoid or delay them?

"Our domeſtic ſituation is no leſs unfavourable, we are loaded with burthens which are almoſt too heavy to bear; the public revenue is ſcarcely ſufficient to ſupply the expences of our civil eſtabliſhment in time of peace: if we enter into war, new taxes muſt be impoſed; the animoſities and diviſions which prevail too much amongſt us will be increaſed; that party which has been, hitherto ſuppreſſed by our vigour and unanimity will again rear its head; our enemies will avail themſelves of the war, to favour the cauſe of the Pretender, and as new burthens are unavoidably laid on the public, theſe misfortunes will be aſcribed to the illuſtrious family on the throne. France and Spain may pour in their troops upon our coaſts, which our fleet cannot always prevent; we ſhall be thrown into confuſion at home, and have neither leiſure or power to diſtreſs our enemies, or protect our colonies.

"I feel

"I feel as much as others for the ſufferings of our merchants, for the indignities which have been inflicted on the nation, by the Spaniſh guarda coſtas; but national reſolutions ought not to be directed by paſſion. We ought to ſhew proper reſentment, but our reſentment ought to be governed by prudence, and if it is, we ſhall ſuſpend it, until Europe preſents a more favourable aſpect. I am therefore of opinion, that if the convention had been leſs favourable, it ought, in the preſent juncture, to have been accepted. But I truſt I have ſhewn that we have acquired as much as we could expect from a preliminary treaty, and have every reaſon to hope, that in the ſpace of eight months we ſhall obtain, by a definitive treaty, all we can deſire."

Moves an addreſs.

He then moved an addreſs, "to return thanks for the communication of the convention; for bringing the demands of his ſubjects to a final determination, and for procuring a ſpeedy payment for the loſſes ſuſtained by the merchants; declaring their ſatisfaction in the foundation laid for preventing and removing ſimilar abuſes in future, and for preſerving peace; to expreſs a reliance on the king, that effectual care would be taken for ſecuring and eſtabliſhing the freedom of navigation in the American ſeas; that the Britiſh ſubjects may enjoy, unmoleſted, their undoubted right of navigating and trading to and from any part of his majeſty's dominions, without being liable to be ſtopped, viſited, or ſearched in the open ſeas, or being ſubject to any other violation of the treaties ſubſiſting;

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ſiſting; and that in ſettling the limits of his dominions in America, the greateſt regard would be had to the rights and poſſeſſions belonging to the crown and ſubject; and to aſſure the king, that in caſe his juſt expectations ſhould not be anſwered, the houſe would ſupport him in taking ſuch meaſures, as might be moſt conducive to vindicate the honour and dignity of his crown, and the rights of his people."

The addreſs was calculated to obviate the ſtrong objections which were made to the convention, ariſing from its not being a definitive treaty, not ſufficiently explicit, and leaving the point to be decided by future diſcuſſion.

The oppoſition ſtrenuouſly ſupported the objections, and in reply to the arguments of Horace Walpole, expatiated on the injured honour of the nation, and the puſillanimity of the miniſter. They deplored the Britiſh trade ruined, Britiſh ſailors impriſoned and tortured, and the Britiſh flag inſulted. They exhauſted every topic wich was calculated to inflame the public mind, and appealed forcibly to the paſſions and feelings.

Of Sir T. Saunderſon.

The ſtory of Jenkins's ears was not omitted. "Even the Spaniſh pirate," exclaimed Sir Thomas Saunderſon, who ſpoke firſt in reply to Horace Walpole, "who cut off captain Jenkins's ear, making uſe at the ſame time of the moſt inſulting expreſſion towards the perſon of our king, an expreſſion which no Britiſh ſubject can decently repeat, an expreſſion which no man that has a regard for his ſovereign can ever forgive; Even this fellow, I ſay,

I ſay, is ſuffered to live to enjoy the fruits of his rapine, and remain a living teſtimony of the cowardly tameneſs and mean ſubmiſſion of Great Britain, and of the triumphant pride and ſtubborn haughtineſs of Spain*."

In contradiction to the ſtatement of Horace Walpole, lord Gage obſerved, "The loſſes ſuſtained by the Spaniſh depredations, amounted to three hundred and forty thouſand pounds. The commiſſary, by a ſtroke of his pen, reduced this demand to two hundred thouſand pounds; then forty-five thouſand were ſtruck off for prompt payment. He then allotted ſixty thouſand pounds as the remaining part of a debt pretended to be due to Spain, for the deſtruction of her fleet by Sir George Byng, though it appeared, by the inſtructions on the table, that Spain had been already amply ſatisfied on that head. Theſe deductions reduced the balance to ninety-five thouſand pounds; but the king of Spain inſiſted upon the South Sea company's paying immediately the ſum of ſixty-eight thouſand pounds, as a debt due to him on one head of accounts, though, in other articles, his Catholic majeſty was indebted to the company a million over and above this demand. The remainder to be paid by Spain, did not exceed ſeven and twenty thouſand pounds, from which ſhe inſiſted upon deducting whatever ſhe might have given in ſatisfaction for any of the Britiſh ſhips that had been taken; and on being allowed the value of the St. Thereſa, a Spaniſh ſhip which had been ſeized in the port of Dublin†."

Of lord Gage.

Pitt,

* Chandler, vol. II. p. 15. † Smollet, vol. 3. p. 10. Chandler.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. Of Pitt.

Pitt, who ſpoke moſt ably on this occaſion, objected to the queſtion, as of too complicated * a nature to be ſubmitted at once to the approbation of the committee. "The addreſs, he ſaid, was propoſed for no other end than to extort an approbation of the convention. He obſerved, that the houſe was proceeding upon an artificial miniſterial queſtion, covering and taking ſanctuary in the royal name, inſtead of meeting openly, and ſtanding fairly, the direct judgment and ſentence of parliament upon the ſeveral articles. "Is this," he exclaimed, "any longer a nation? or where is an Engliſh parliament, if with more ſhips in our harbours than in all the navies of Europe, with more than two millions of people in the American colonies, we will bear to hear of the expediency of receiving from Spain, an inſecure, unſatisfactory, diſhonourable convention, which carries downright ſubjection in every line."

He ſaid, that the great national objection, the ſearching of ſhips, ſtood in the preamble of the convention, as the reproach of the whole, as the ſtrongeſt evidence of the fatal ſubmiſſion which followed. On the part of Spain, an uſurpation, an inhuman tyranny, claimed and exerciſed over the American ſeas; on the part of England, an undoubted right by treaties, and from God and nature, declared and aſſerted in the reſolution of parliament, was now referred to the diſcuſſion of plenipotentiaries, on one and the ſame equal foot. This undoubted right was to be diſcuſſed and regulated,

* Memorandums of Sir Robert Walpole.

gulated, and if to regulate, be to prescribe rules (as in all construction it is) this right is, by the express words of the convention, to be given up and sacrificed; for it must cease to be any thing from the moment it is submitted to limits. He concluded in the most energetic language, "This convention, Sir, I think, from my soul, is nothing but a stipulation for national ignominy; an illusory expedient to baffle the resentment of the nation; a truce without a suspension of hostilities on the part of Spain; on the part of England, a suspension. As to Georgia, of the first law of nature, self-preservation and self-defence; a surrender of the rights and trade of England to the mercy of plenipotentiaries, and in this infinitely highest and sacred point, future security, not only inadequate, but directly repugnant to the resolutions of parliament, and the gracious promise of the throne. The complaints of your despairing merchants, the voice of England has condemned it; be the guilt of it upon the head of the adviser; God forbid that this committee should share the guilt by approving it!*"

Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739.

It was observed by Lyttleton, "The grievances of England admit but of one remedy, a very short and simple one; that our ships shall not be searched on any pretence. This alone can go to the root of our grievances, all less than this is trifling, hurtful, and fatal to commerce.

Of Lyttleton.

"Had we proceeded conformably to the intentions

* Chandler.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. tions of parliament, we ſhould either have acted with vigour, or have obtained a real ſecurity, in an expreſs acknowledgment of our right not to be ſearched, as a preliminary *ſine quâ non* to our treating at all. This we ought to have inſiſted on in the words of La Quadra's proteſt (which is the preliminary *ſine quâ non* of that crown) we ought to have inſiſted on in thoſe very words, "as the preciſe and "eſſential means to overcome the ſo much de-"bated diſputes, and that on the validity and force "of this expreſs acknowledgment, the ſigning the "convention may be proceeded on, and in no "other manner." Inſtead of this, what we have done? We have referred it to plenipotentiaries! Is not this weakening our right? Would you, Sir, ſubmit to a reference, whether you may travel unmoleſted from your houſe in town to your houſe in the country? Your right is clear and undeniable, why would you have it diſcuſſed? But much leſs would you refer it, if two of your judges belonged to a gang, which has often ſtopped and robbed you in your way thither before.

"But what is this wretched reprieve that we have begged for eight months? Will that do us any good? Will that be worth our acceptance? Do we really flatter ourſelves that we are now at peace? Peace is a ſecure and unmoleſted enjoyment of our rights. But peace, at the expence of rights, of eſſential rights, peace expoſed to inſults, peace expoſed to injuries, is the moſt abject, is the moſt deplorable, is the moſt calamitous circumſtance of human affairs. It is the worſt effect that could

could be produced by the moſt ruinous war. With ſcorn let us reject it, that to all we have ſuffered before, to all the accumulated inſults ever heaped upon a nation, a worſe diſhonour may not be added, and that diſhonour fall upon the parliament. And therefore I give my moſt hearty negative to this queſtion*."

The miniſter ſpoke laſt in this important debate. His principal efforts were directed to remove the objection of its not being a definitive treaty. He readily allowed that it was not, but contended that it laid the foundation for one. He again adverted to the ſhare which he had in laying this foundation, and declared it to be his greateſt boaſt at preſent, and would be his greateſt honour in ſucceeding times, to be mentioned as the miniſter who had endeavoured by this convention to prevent the neceſſity of making war upon a nation with whom it was our greateſt intereſt to be at peace, at a time when the doubtful ſituation of Europe left us little hopes of aſſiſtance, and gave well-founded apprehenſions of being attacked by other powers. He declared that a war with Spain, after the conceſſions already made, was unjuſt, impolitic, and diſhonourable; that England being a trading nation, the proſperity of that trade ought to be the principal object in view. "Admitting, however," he ſaid, "that the convention has not effectually anſwered the expectations of the houſe, ſhould it not be conſidered whether the declaration of

Of Walpole.

* Chandler.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. of war would benefit trade, what proſpect of ſucceſs could be reaſonably entertained, and particularly whether even a ſucceſsful war with Spain, might not involve us in a very doubtful and expenſive war with other powers? Theſe conſiderations ſeem never once to have occupied the thoughts of thoſe who are adverſe to the queſtion. It is laid down as a maxim, that we ought immediately to enter into a war, and yet nothing is allowed for the uncertainty of the event, for the interruption of commerce, and the prodigious expence with which it would be attended. But ſhould we even lay aſide theſe conſiderations, are we to have no regard to common juſtice, to thoſe treaties, the obſervance of which has been ſo juſtly contended for? Theſe treaties prohibit all trade with the Spaniſh Weſt Indies, excepting that carried on by the annual aſſiento ſhip. In contradiction then to theſe expreſs ſtipulations, are our ſhips never to be ſearched, and is the trade to the Spaniſh Weſt Indies open to every interloper? For what difference is there between throwing that trade open, and having a liberty not only of approaching their coaſts, but even of hovering on them as long as we pleaſe, without being ſtopped or ſearched? Theſe are the unjuſt conceſſions which the advocates of a war require. The convention, on the contrary, ſtipulates that the treaties ſubſiſting between the two crowns, ſhould be the rule for ſettling diſputes relating to trade. We are, therefore, in no danger of ſuffering from the convention, becauſe it is admitted that all we ought in reaſon to claim, is the obſervance

obſervance of thoſe treaties." He hoped, therefore, that the addreſs would paſs. Chapter 52. 1738 to 1739.

The addreſs was carried by a majority of only 28; 260 againſt 232*. Addreſs carried.

On the enſuing day, the report of the reſolution in the committee to addreſs the king, being read, the re-commitment was warmly urged. Pulteney, who had reſerved himſelf for this day, opened the debate, and was ſeconded by Sir William Wyndham. Their ſpeeches were full of declamation and invective, and contained no new arguments. The miniſter replied in a long and elaborate ſpeech, in which he defended the convention, and explained the treaties of 1667 and 1670. He ſhewed that the demand of not ſearching Britiſh ſhips was a new demand, and therefore it could not be expected that Spain ſhould renounce a right which they had hitherto exerciſed, without due examination. He obſerved, that the buſineſs was of ſo intricate, as well as delicate a nature, that it could not be ſettled at once, and in a moment, and therefore in reaſon, juſtice, and prudence, was properly left to the diſcuſſion of the plenipotentiaries. After a few other ſpeeches of little conſequence, the motion for a re-commitment was negatived by 244 againſt 214†. March 9. Motion for re-commitment.

* Chandler. † Journals.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-THIRD:

1739.

Secession of the Minority.—Consequences.—Beneficial Acts of Parliament.—Danish Subsidy.—Opposition and Anecdotes of John Duke of Argyle.—Vote of Credit.—Termination of the Spanish Negotiation.—Declaration of War.—Conduct of England:—And of Sir Robert Walpole.—Divisions in the Cabinet.

Secession of the minority.

THE last effort to prevent the address on the convention having proved ineffectual, great part of the minority carried into execution, a design which they had previously concerted. It was no less than to absent themselves, or, as it was called, to *secede* from parliament.

Speech of Sir William Wyndham.

Accordingly, Sir William Wyndham, to whose advice, at the instigation of Bolingbroke, this measure has been usually attributed, said, "I have seen with the utmost concern, this shameful, this fatal measure, approved of by a majority of but 28, and I now rise to pay my last duty to my country, as a member of this house.

"I was in hopes that the many unanswerable arguments urged in the debate against the convention, might have prevailed upon gentlemen to have for once listened to the dictates of reason; for once to have distinguished themselves from being a faction against the liberties and properties of their fellow subjects. I was the more in hopes of this, since in all the companies I have been in from the time this convention has been spoken of,

of, I have not found one ſingle perſon without doors pretend to juſtify it. Is it not ſtrange, that the eloquence of one man ſhould have ſo great an effect within theſe walls, and the unanimous voice of a brave ſuffering people without, ſhould have ſo little? I am ſurpriſed that I ſhould be ſo blind as not to diſcern one argument that has the leaſt appearance of reaſon, among all that has been offered, for our agreeing to this addreſs. This muſt proceed either from the majority of this houſe being determined by arguments that we have not heard, or from my wanting common ſenſe to comprehend the force of thoſe we have heard. In the firſt caſe, I think I cannot, with honour, ſit in an aſſembly which is determined by motives which I am not at liberty to mention; and if the laſt is the caſe, I look upon myſelf as a very unfit perſon to ſerve as a ſenator. I here, Sir, bid a final adieu to this houſe. Perhaps when another parliament ſhall ſucceed, I may be again at liberty to ſerve my country in the ſame capacity. I therefore appeal, Sir, to a future, free, uninfluenced houſe of commons. Let it be the judge of my conduct, and that of my friends, on this occaſion. Mean time, I ſhall conclude with doing that duty to my country I am ſtill at liberty to perform, which is to pray for its preſervation:

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" May, therefore, that Power which has ſo often and ſo viſibly interpoſed in behalf of the rights and liberties of this nation, continue its care over us at this worſt and moſt dangerous juncture, whilſt the inſolence of enemies without, and the influence of

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. corruption within, threaten the ruin of her conſtitution."

The animated tone of voice, and impaſſioned geſture which accompanied this effuſion, were as dignified and ſtriking, as the expreſſions were petulant and offenſive. The inſult offered to the houſe in calling the majority a faction, raiſed the indignation of Pelham, and he was in the act of riſing to move for commitment to the Tower, when the miniſter, conſcious that ſuch a meaſure would create a dangerous ferment in the country, prevented him by riſing himſelf, and with an animation and ſpirit equal to that which had diſtinguiſhed Sir William Wyndham, ſaid,

Walpole's reply. "Sir, the meaſures which the gentleman who ſpoke laſt, and his friends may purſue, give me no uneaſineſs. The friends of the nation, and the houſe, are obliged to them for pulling off the maſk, by making this public declaration. We can be upon our guard againſt open rebellion, but 'tis difficult to guard againſt ſecret traitors. The faction I ſpeak of, never ſat in this houſe, they never joined in any public meaſure of the government, but with a view to diſtreſs it, and ſerve a popiſh intereſt. The gentleman who is now the mouth of this faction, was looked upon as the head of thoſe traitors, who, twenty-five years ago, conſpired the deſtruction of their country, and of the royal family, to ſet a popiſh pretender upon the throne. He was ſeiſed by the vigilance of government, and pardoned by its clemency; but all the uſe he ungratefully made of that clemency, has been to qualify himſelf

himſelf according to *law*, that he and his party may, ſome time or other, have an opportunity to overthrow all *law*. Chapter 53. 1739.

" I am only afraid that they will not be ſo good as their word, and that they will return; for I remember that, in the caſe of their favourite prelate *, who was impeached of treaſon, the ſame gentleman and his faction made the ſame reſolution. They then went off like traitors as they were; but their retreat had not the deteſtable effect they expected and wiſhed, and therefore they returned. Ever ſince, Sir, they have perſevered in the ſame treaſonable intention of ſerving that intereſt, by diſtreſſing the government. But I hope their behaviour will unite all true friends of the preſent happy eſtabliſhment of the crown in his majeſty's perſon and family more firmly than ever; and that the gentlemen who, with good intentions, have been deluded into the like meaſures, will awaken from their deluſion ſince the trumpet of rebellion is now audaciouſly ſounded †."

The conſequence of this meaſure was, to the ſeceders, diſappointment and ſpeedy repentance—to the miniſter, ſatisfaction and triumph. In fact, they had ſcarcely declared their reſolution, before they ſaw and appreciated the impropriety and ill policy of the meaſure. They even flattered themſelves with the hopes of being called back to their poſts. Several of the minority, among whom were Sir John Barnard and lord Cornbury, refuſed to deſert their

* Atterbury. † Gentleman's Magazine, 1739.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. their parliamentary ſtations; and the applauſe which they received from their conſtituents, as well as from all moderate perſons, was a tacit reflection on the conduct of the others. In fact, the ſeceders ſeemed not unwilling to retrieve their error as ſoon as they had committed it, by availing themſelves of the call of the houſe, which ſtood for the enſuing Monday, and to have come down in a body for the purpoſe of enforcing ſome violent motion*. But the miniſter ſuſpecting this deſign, prevented the execution of it, by obtaining an adjournment of the houſe till Tueſday†. They now experienced the ill policy of their conduct: The nation was not inflamed by their abſence. It required no great depth of underſtanding to comprehend theſe ſimple queſtions: If it be admitted that the conſtitution was in danger, why did they quit their ſtation? If the majority of the commons was a faction, influenced or corrupted by the miniſter, why did they make that faction ſtronger by retiring from the houſe, and leaving the miniſter in poſſeſſion of means to extend his corruption with greater facility?

It was a great cauſe of ſatisfaction and triumph to the miniſter, who declared that no event during his whole adminiſtration, had ever relieved him from more embarraſſments, or ſupplied him with greater means of ſerving the real intereſts of this country. He obſerved, that while he was continually

* John Selwyn to Stephen Poyntz. Sidney Papers. Correſpondence.

† Journals,

nually baited by oppoſition, he could not introduce a ſingle bill, of the moſt beneficial tendency, which would not meet with reſiſtance, or expoſe him to obloquy. But as the principal leaders of the minority had retired from parliament, he had an opportunity to propoſe ſeveral, which tended to promote the commerce and manufactures of the country. Chapter 53. 1739.

In conformity with this plan, he encouraged and invited every ſcheme which ſeemed calculated for the advantage of the internal and colonial trade. The manufactures of cloth were increaſed by the bill, which laid additional duties on the exportation of wool, and facilitated its importation from Ireland. The trade of the Britiſh colonies in the Weſt Indies, was highly improved by an act permitting the introduction of ſugar into foreign parts in Engliſh bottoms, without firſt landing it in Great Britain, and by rendering more effectual the duties on foreign ſugar and molaſſes.

A bill alſo, of conſiderable public advantage, paſſed this ſeſſion, for enlarging the powers of the commiſſioners of Weſtminſter Bridge, and for enabling them to execute the whole ſtructure in ſtone inſtead of wood*.

During the ſeceſſion, the miniſter was embarraſſed with a motion for the repeal of the teſt act. The diſſenters took this opportunity to renew their petition, from a perſuaſion, that the abſence of the Tories would deliver them from ſo many certain opponents. The Tories themſelves, when appealed to Attempt to repeal the teſt act.

* Journals. Chandler.

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to by the miniſter's friends, expreſſed a malignant ſatisfaction at his diſtreſs. They wiſhed to ſee in what manner he would conduct himſelf in ſo delicate a ſituation, and ſeemed not unwilling that it ſhould paſs the houſe of commons, conſcious that it would be thrown out by the lords.

The hopes of the diſſenters, and the malice of the Tories, were equally baffled by the event. Many of the Whigs, who uſually gave their votes in favour of the repeal, yet deteſted the principles on which the Tories acted, and conſidering the motion as improperly introduced, with a view to perplex government, voted againſt it, and, notwithſtanding the abſence of the Tories, it was negatived by a larger majority than had ever appeared on that occaſion, 188 againſt 89*.

It was probably at this period, that the miniſter, vexed at the diſſenters, and conſcious that he ſhould, by ſubmitting to the repeal, incur the diſpleaſure of the numerous friends to the eſtabliſhed church who ſupported his meaſures, by his imprudent frankneſs diſobliged the whole body. A deputation of diſſenters waited upon him, and Dr. Chandler, their principal, requeſted him to take into conſideration, his repeated aſſurances of good will to their cauſe, and hoped that he would aſſiſt in obtaining the repeal of the teſt act. He made them the uſual anſwer, that whatever were his private inclinations, the attempt was improper, and the time was not yet arrived. "You have ſo repeatedly returned this anſwer," replied Dr. Chandler,

* Mr. Selwyn to the Hon. T. Townſhend. Correſpondence.

Chandler, "that I truſt you will give me leave to aſk you when the time will come?" "If you require a ſpecific anſwer," ſaid the miniſter, "I will give it you in a word—Never *." Chapter 55. 1739.

Fortunately for the miniſter, the abſence of the ſeceding members delivered him from much of that embarraſſment which he muſt have experienced had they remained in the houſe during the diſcuſſion of the Daniſh ſubſidy, which was, nevertheleſs, a ſubject of conſiderable obloquy and miſrepreſentation. The king, as elector of Hanover, had purchaſed the caſtle and lordſhip of Steinhorſt from the duke of Holſtein; but the title being diſputed by a ſubject of Denmark, the king of Denmark ordered a corps of troops to garriſon the caſtle. When a detachment of Hanoverians arrived to take poſſeſſion, a ſkirmiſh enſued, and the Danes were driven from the place. This event inflamed the reſentment of the king of Denmark, who made preparations as if he intended to revenge the inſult, but the affair was ſoon after compromiſed: A treaty was concluded with the king of Denmark, who agreed to hold in readineſs 6,000 troops for the ſervice of England, on receiving an annual ſubſidy of 250,000 rix dollars, and 150,000 more when they ſhould be taken into Britiſh pay †. As this treaty was concluded ſoon after the diſpute concerning Steinhorſt, and as the caſtle and lordſhip were at the ſame time ceded by Daniſh ſubſidy.

by

* From authentic information, communicated by a perſon who had it from Dr. Chandler.

† Tindal, vol. 20. p. 414.

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by Denmark to Hanover, the oppoſition naturally coupled theſe two events together, and when the treaty was announced to the houſe of commons, ſuggeſted that the compromiſe had been made at the expence of this country, that Steinhorſt was acquired by Britiſh money: their ſtatement has been adopted as true, and conſigned to the pages of hiſtory *. This aſperſion, however, is contradicted by the ſecret hiſtory of this treaty, which the miniſter at the time could not avow, and therefore only grounded his defence on the common topic of expediency.

At the period now under conſideration, a war between England and Spain was unavoidable; and France, foreſeeing the probability of being drawn into hoſtilities, was ſecretly endeavouring to form alliances with ſeveral foreign powers, and to detach others from Great Britain. For this purpoſe ſhe had ſecured Sweden, but failing in the attempt to gain Ruſſia, turned her views to Denmark. The ſituation and circumſtances of the ſovereign, Chriſtian the Sixth, gave hopes of ſucceſs: he had involved himſelf in great expences from his love of building, and various projects, and was at this time encumbered with debts. Chavigni, the French miniſter at Copenhagen, offered the moſt advantageous terms if the king would engage in an alliance with France, and as the affair of Steinhorſt had recently happened, endeavoured to inflame him againſt George the Second, and propoſed

* Smollett, vol. 3. p. 13. Belſham, vol. 1. p. 382.

propoſed a triple alliance with France and Sweden, by which Ruſſia would be awed, England would have much difficulty in procuring naval ſtores from the Baltic, and the electorate of Hanover would be expoſed to the united arms of the allied powers. To gain Chriſtian, the French offered a ſubſidy of 400,000 rix dollars, for ſix, eight, or ten years, required no troops, but promiſed a powerful ſuccour to Denmark if attacked, and demanded no aſſiſtance in return if France was invaded. The king of Denmark frankly communicated theſe propoſals to Titley, the Engliſh miniſter at Copenhagen *; obſerved, that burthened as he was with debts, he required a ſubſidy; declared that he preferred the alliance of England, and that he would accept a ſmaller ſum, and agree to leſs advantageous terms from England than were offered by France. The treaty was accordingly arranged, and concluded; the inſidious deſigns of France and Sweden were diſconcerted, and the peace of the north ſecured.

If any proofs were wanting to ſhew that the oppoſition to the miniſter was in moſt caſes merely perſonal, and that every meaſure, however innocent or indifferent, was ſuppoſed to be dictated by him, and promoted for ſome private view, an incident which paſſed in the houſe of lords will leave no doubt on the ſubject. When the bill for allowing the king to ſettle an annuity of £. 45,000 a year on his younger children, was brought from the commons to the lords, it was obſerved, in the courſe

* Extracts of Titley's Letters to lord Harrington. Walpole Papers.

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courſe of the debate, that the children of the prince of Wales were not only unprovided but *unprayed* for. This obſervation alluded to the form of prayer for the royal family, iſſued by the privy council upon the marriage of the prince of Wales, when the name of the duke of Cumberland ſtood next to thoſe of the prince and princeſs, and had not yet been altered. This ſuggeſtion was levelled againſt the miniſter, as if he had interfered for the purpoſe of inſulting the prince. On this occaſion the earl of Wilmington, who ſeldom ſpoke in any debate, broke his uſual ſilence, informed the houſe, that he himſelf had counſeled the king to order the form of prayer as it then ſtood, and declared that the miniſter was totally unacquainted with the arrangement. This frank and generous declaration had the deſired effect. At the moment it was known that the miniſter had no concern in the buſineſs, the petulance of oppoſition ceaſed, and the bill paſſed without farther impediment *.

At this period the houſe of lords was no leſs the theatre of contention than the houſe of commons; and the number of ſpeakers on the ſide of oppoſition great and formidable. The principal ſpeakers on the ſide of government were, Newcaſtle, Hardwicke, Hervey, Cholmondeley, Ilay, and Devonſhire. Thoſe on the contrary ſide were, Carteret, Cheſterfield, Bathurſt, Weſtmoreland, Bedford, Sandwich, Halifax, Talbot, and Gower.

Oppoſition and anecdotes of John duke of Argyle.

To this choſen band, was recently added John duke of Argyle and Greenwich, whoſe principles and

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 417.

and motives will be beſt underſtood from an account of his previous life and conduct. He was born in 1678, and gave early indications of talents and capacity, which, however, were rather brilliant than ſolid, and he attained as great a proficiency in claſſical learning as a deſultory application would permit. He diſcovered a propenſity to a military life, and being permitted to embrace the profeſſion of arms, was promoted by king William to the command of a regiment of foot, before he had attained the age of nineteen. Chapter 53. 1739.

In 1703 he ſucceeded his father in his titles and eſtates, and to the conſequence of firſt feudal lord in the Highlands of Scotland. He was appointed member of the privy council, captain of the Scotch horſe guards, knight of the thiſtle, and one of the extraordinary lords of ſeſſion. In 1705, he was nominated lord high commiſſioner to the parliament of Scotland; opened the parliament by a ſpeech, and by his influence had a great ſhare in promoting the union, though he declined being one of the commiſſioners. On his return to England, his ſervices were ſo highly approved that he was created an Engliſh peer, by the title of baron of Chatham and earl of Greenwich. In 1706, 1708, and 1709, he made campaigns under the duke of Marlborough, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf on various occaſions, particularly at the battles of Ramilies, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet, at the ſieges of Oſtend and Ghent, and at the aſſaults of Menin and Tournay. During theſe campaigns he gave inſtances of his high ſpirit and proneneſs

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to take offence, by an oppoſition to the duke of Marlborough, with whom he is ſaid to have been at continued variance. His diſguſt was carried to ſo great a height, that in 1710, when it was moved in the houſe of peers that thanks ſhould be given to the duke of Marlborough, the duke of Argyle made ſome petulant objections to the motion.

His conduct endeared him to Harley and the Tories, who then paid great court to a nobleman of his high rank, parliamentary abilities, and military talents, and he was accordingly, in 1710, inveſted with the garter. He then quitted the Whigs, whom he had hitherto ſupported, ſpoke and voted with the Tories, and joined in the cenſure that was paſſed on the late adminiſtration.

In conſequence of theſe exertions, he was appointed embaſſador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to Charles the Third, king of Spain, and commander in chief of the Britiſh forces in that country. During his continuance in that high ſtation, he performed no exploits of conſequence, which he imputed to the miniſtry, who were employed in negotiating the peace of Utrecht. He loudly complained of their neglect, and was ſo much offended, that although on his return to England he was conſtituted commander in chief of all the land forces in Scotland, he ſoon became a violent opponent of Oxford's adminiſtration, and reſiſted the extenſion of the malt tax to Scotland. He ſupported the motion, made by the earl of Seafield, to diſſolve the union, which he had ſo great ſhare in forming, warmly ſpoke in

favour of the propoſition, that the proteſtant ſucceſſion was in danger, and bitterly cenſured the peace of Utrecht. In conſequence of this oppoſition, he was removed from all his employments. Chapter 53. 1739.

On the illneſs of the queen, which terminated in her death, he repaired, with the duke of Somerſet, to the council chamber, inſiſted that the phyſicians ſhould be examined, and by his conduct on this occaſion, rendered an eſſential ſervice to the houſe of Hanover.

On the acceſſion of George the Firſt, his ſervices were not overlooked: He was appointed one of the lords juſtices till the arrival of the king, reſtored to his employment of commander in chief of the Britiſh forces in Scotland, was a member of the privy council, and made governor of Minorca, and colonel of the royal regiment of horſe guards. He was, at this time, in high favour at court, was ſelected as one of the commiſſioners for eſtabliſhing the houſehold of the prince and princeſs of Wales, and made groom of the ſtole to the prince.

As commander in chief of the forces in Scotland, he was in 1715 ſent to quell the rebellion, and partially defeated the rebels with a much ſuperior force at the battle of Dumblain. His conduct, however, as well as his military operations on ſubſequent occaſions, were expoſed to much cenſure. Though he was a man of high ſpirit and undaunted courage, and always expoſed his perſon more than became the general in chief, yet he was before the engagement irreſolute and diffi-

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dent of his talents. He did not know how to ſeize the deciſive moment of action. When he broke the enemy's left wing, he was hurried on by his ardour to purſue them too far, and on his return to the field of battle found that his own troops had ſuffered extremely, and that had the enemy taken advantage of their ſucceſs, the king's army might have been entirely routed. In fact his conduct was rallied by the country people, who ſaid that the general was a much better chriſtian than a commander in chief, for he did not let his left hand know what his right hand did *.

He was accuſed of dilatory meaſures, and, in his turn, arraigned the miniſtry for neglect and inconſiſtency. The letters which paſſed between him and lord Townſhend, are filled with complaints, apologies, and recriminations; and he returned from Scotland as much diſſatisfied with the king and miniſters as they were diſſatisfied with him †.

His ſituation in the houſehold of the prince of Wales, gave ſufficient opportunity to ingratiate himſelf with the heir apparent. His graceful manners, his dignified demeanour, his ſplendid talents, his animated converſation, ſoon captivated the prince, and excited the jealouſy of George the Firſt. On the miſunderſtanding in the royal family, he attached himſelf to the ſon, and was ſuſpected by the king of fomenting the prince's diſcontent. On this account he was ſuddenly removed

9

* Anſwer to the Speech of the Duke of Argyle, p. 38.

† Correſpondence between Lord Townſhend and the Duke of Argyle. Townſhend Papers.

moved from the poſt of groom of the ſtole, and deprived of all his employments, to the great regret of the prince, who placed implicit confidence in him and his brother the earl of Ilay. Chapter 53. 1739.

During the king's abſence he was much conſulted by the prince; and while he was accuſed by Walpole and Townſhend of caballing with the Tories, one of the cauſes of diſguſt which the king entertained againſt thoſe miniſters was, that they privately caballed with the duke of Argyle and his brother *.

From the time of his removal he oppoſed adminiſtration with great acrimony, until he was ſoftened by the place of lord ſteward of the houſehold, which was conferred on him in 1719. From this period he uniformly ſupported the meaſures of government, although he was occaſionally diſguſted with the miniſtry.

In the debates which took place on the murder of captain Porteous, and on the bill of pains and penalties againſt the provoſt and city of Edinburgh; he threw out ſeveral peeviſh expreſſions, teſtifying his diſlike to all kinds of jobs, which were ſuppoſed to be levelled againſt the miniſter, and ſeemed to indicate that he was diſſatisfied. At the time of the rupture between the king and prince of Wales, his diſcontent became more manifeſt, and he finally entered the liſts of oppoſition during the diſcuſſion of Spaniſh affairs.

It is ſtill undecided whether his acceſſion to the ſide of oppoſition was derived from the quick ſight which

* See Chapter 15.

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which he is ſaid to have poſſeſſed *when* it was time to leave a miniſter from diſguſt and diſappointment, or from diſapprobation of meaſures. But whatever were the motives which influenced his conduct, his defection was a ſevere blow to the miniſter. He gave freſh ſpirits and energy to the cauſe of oppoſition in the houſe of lords. His violent and declamatory ſpeeches were calculated to make a deep impreſſion on the public mind, and his perſonal weight and intereſt in the houſe of commons ſeduced ſeveral members from the miniſterial intereſt, amongſt whom was Dodington, who had long attached himſelf to the duke, and looked up to him as a ſpecies of *demigod*.

The averſion which the anti-miniſterial party had conceived againſt the duke of Argyle, was now converted into reſpect and love *. He who was bitterly arraigned for political verſatility, was now

* The progreſs of party prejudice is well exemplified in the "Opinions of Sarah, ducheſs of Marlborough," who entertained a ſtrong contempt and averſion for the duke of Argyle, while he ſupported Sir Robert Walpole, but inſtantly changed her opinion in his favour, when the duke entered the liſts of oppoſition.

"1738.—It is ſaid the duke of Argyle is extremly angry. It is a common ſaying, that when a houſe is to fall the rats go away; but I doubt there is nothing of that in this caſe, and I rather think the anger muſt be to have ſome new demand ſatisfied, which is a thing his grace has often done.

"1738.—After all the great noiſe there was of the duke of Argyle's being irreconcilably angry with Sir Robert; every thing has paſt ſince in the houſe without his ſaying the leaſt word to ſhew it; *that* was no ſurpriſe to me.

"1738-9.—I think it is quite ſure that the duke of Argyle is determined, and has thrown away the ſcabbard, and he uſes to have a very quick ſight *when* it was time to leave a miniſter.

"1738-9.—The duke of Argyle ſpoke charmingly (on the convention with Spain) and has certainly thrown away the ſcabbard.

"1738-9.—All the hatred I once had to him, upon a very juſt account, is now turned into love.

"1740-1.—The duke of Argyle ſpoke as well as it was poſſible for a man to do."

now applauded for his virtue and patriotism. His opposition to the minister cancelled at once all former errors, and he suddenly became the idol of the party. Pulteney paid a high eulogium to his great merit and exalted talents, while he was present in the house of commons, for the purpose of hearing the debate. Speaking of those who had voted against the convention, Pulteney observed, "They who had the courage, Sir, to follow the dictates of their own breasts (I do not mean to reflect on any gentleman) were disabled from farther serving their country in a military capacity. One exception, Sir, I know there is, and I need not tell gentlemen that I have in my eye one military person, great in his character, great in his capacity, great in the important offices he has discharged, who wants nothing to make him still greater, but to be stripped of all the posts, of all the places he now enjoys.—But that, Sir, they dare not do *."

In the common topics of opposition, the duke of Argyle felt no embarrassment, but when an accusation was brought forwards for past transactions, which had taken place during his continuance in administration, in the support of which he had been active and zealous, he felt himself in an awkward situation. It was not possible to reconcile his invective against the minister with his well-known and often repeated apothegm, That all first ministers had been faulty, but that Sir Robert

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 404.

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bert Walpole had the leaſt faults of any miniſter with whom he had ever been concerned *. As an apology, therefore, for his firſt ſupporting, and afterwards arraigning the ſame meaſures, he inſiſted that the miniſter had engroſſed the whole power of government, that the privy council was excluded from all knowledge of the proceedings, and that the meaſures were only ſubmitted to them for approbation, and not for examination. He mentioned himſelf as a witneſs of the truth of this ſtatement. For although he was commander in chief, yet the knowledge of many material tranſactions had been withheld from him. He ſaid that there were two cabinet councils in the kingdom, the king had one, and the miniſter had another, and that the king's knew little or nothing of what was done in the other. He thus endeavoured to exculpate himſelf, and to throw on the miniſter the whole blame of paſt tranſactions, which he and his party were diſpoſed to arraign, as arguments for his removal.

The duke of Argyle was a warm, impetuous, and animated orator. He poſſeſſed great fluency of language and elegance of diction. His ſpeeches were highly declamatory, and filled with affected expreſſions of candour, conviction, and diſintereſtedneſs. They had always a conſiderable effect, by appearing to be unpremeditated effuſions flowing from the occaſion and adapted to the moment. They were accompanied with all the graces of elocution, geſture, and dignity of manner. His eloquence

* The Duke of Argyle's Speech anſwered, p. 31, 32.

eloquence was highly celebrated by Pope and Thomſon *. Chapter 53. 1739.

As there was great reaſon to apprehend that the court of Spain would not fulfil her engagements, by paying the £.95,000, the king ſent a meſſage to parliament, expreſſing hopes that they would enable him to make ſuch farther augmentations of his forces, both by ſea and land, and to concert ſuch meaſures as the emergency of affairs might require during the receſs of parliament. The houſe of lords returned an addreſs, aſſuring him of their ſupport. The commons reſolved, that towards enabling the king to augment his forces, if neceſſary, the ſum of £.500,000 ſhould be granted. The vote of credit.

They alſo voted £.60,000, which, according to the terms of the convention, were due to Spain for the ſhips taken in 1718, and this ſum, with the £.95,000, was to be applied towards making ſatisfaction to his majeſty's injured ſubjects for their loſſes. The ſeſſion was, ſoon after, cloſed by prorogation. The king's meſſage, the addreſs of the lords, and reſolutions of the commons, were ſent to Mr. Keene, who was ordered to acquaint La Quadra, now marquis of Villarias, that this was a proviſional power which was thought neceſſary to be given during the receſs of parliament, ſhould any emergency occur which concerned June 14. Farther tranſactions with Spain.

* "Argyle, the ſtate's whole thunder born to wield,
"And ſhake alike the ſenate and the field."

And Thomſon ſays of him,

——— "from his rich tongue
"Perſuaſion flows, and wins the high debate."

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cerned the honour, intereſt, and ſafety of the king's dominions, and ought not to excite jealouſy, and that the grant of the £.60,000, to be paid by England, if Spain would diſcharge the £.95,000, within the time limited by the convention, was a proof of the king's deſign to fulfil his engagements. But this conciliating language had no effect. The face of affairs was totally changed in Spain; the haughty and inſulting language of the Engliſh parliament and people diſguſted and provoked that ſenſitive nation, and for ſome time all the actions of the Spaniſh court fully proved their determined reſolution not to fulfil the terms of the convention.

The Spaniſh miniſters made bitter remonſtrances on the continuance of admiral Haddock's fleet in the Mediterranean, which they conſidered as inſulting their coaſts *.

May 5. When the plenipotentiaries met, the Spaniſh full powers were not ſo extenſive as the Britiſh, and the meeting was adjourned on that account.

May 17. Villarias declared, on application being made from the South Sea company, that the king of Spain would liſten to no propoſal on the part of the

May 23. company, until the £.68,000 was paid. The full powers were allowed to be drawn up in due form, de la Quintana, one of the Spaniſh plenipotentiaries, announced, in the name of his maſter, that while the Britiſh ſquadron remained in the Mediterranean, no *grace or facilities* were to be expected, that the Engliſh were to be treated according to the

* Account of the negotiation with Spain, Walpole Papers.

the rules of the moſt rigid juſtice, as the honour of the king of Spain would not permit any condeſcenſion while ſuch a ſcourge hung over them. The king of Spain himſelf, bitterly complained to Mr. Keene of the inſult offered to his honour, by the continuance of the Britiſh ſquadron on his coaſt, and declared, that as the South Sea company "refuſed to pay the £.68,000, he thought himſelf at liberty to revoke the aſſiento for negroes, and to ſeize their effects as an indemnification for that ſum *." Chapter 53. 1739.

After this audience, Villarias ſignified to Mr. Keene, that his maſter conſidered the peace at an end; that there was no dependence on the promiſes of the Britiſh court; inſiſted on the claim of ſearching ſhips in the American ſeas, and concluded by intimating, that if that claim was not admitted as the baſis of future negotiations, there could be no occaſion for any farther conference †. This was juſtly conſidered as a prelude to the declaration of war; the moſt vigorous preparations were made in England for offenſive operations; Haddock, who was cruiſing off Cadiz, was conſiderably reinforced; Sir John Norris hoiſted the union flag on board the Namur, at Chatham; Sir Chaloner Ogle was ordered to the Weſt Indies with a large force, while Horace Walpole embarked for Holland to require the quota of troops, ſtipulated by treaties in caſe of a war.

The miniſtry had ſent to Mr. Keene his laſt inſtructions, which were, to declare that the king inſiſted

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 419. † Ibid.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. inſiſted on a full renunciation on the part of Spain, of all claims of ſearching Britiſh ſhips, as the baſis of a future treaty, and that the honour of the Britiſh crown and nation would not ſuffer any farther negotiations, but upon that condition. He likewiſe demanded, in very peremptory terms, the immediate execution of all that had been ſtipulated on the part of Spain by the convention, and that the Britiſh rights to Georgia and Carolina ſhould be expreſsly acknowledged in the future treaty. He farther obſerved, that the failure of the crown of Spain to fulfil the terms of the convention, had given a new turn to the ſtate of affairs between the two courts, which intitled his Britannic majeſty to be more peremptory, and to riſe in his demands, eſpecially conſidering the vaſt expences which the Spaniſh breach of faith had obliged Great Britain to incur, in armaments both by ſea and land. Mr. Keene, as uſual, received an evaſive anſwer, but renewed his applications to the Spaniſh miniſtry, and firmly told them, that his court had adopted a reſolution of granting their ſubjects liberty to make repriſals on the Spaniards, and that he was ordered to leave Spain if he did not immediately receive a ſatisfactory anſwer *.

The reply amounted to a declaration of war. The Spaniſh court, ſecretly inſtigated by the French, eager to obtain the aſſiento contract, and to become the carriers of the Spaniſh trade into the Weſt Indies, rejected ſo diſhonourable a compromiſe,

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 421.

miſe, and prepared for hoſtilities with unſuual activity. The Britiſh cabinet iſſued letters of repriſals, and Admiral Vernon was ſent with nine men of war to intercept the Aſſogue ſhips in their paſſage from America to Spain, and then to reduce Porto Bello. Chapter 53. 1739.

The declaration of war againſt Spain was received by all ranks and diſtinctions of men, with a degree of enthuſiaſm and joy, which announced the general frenzy of the nation. The bells were pealed in all the churches of London*; huzzas and acclamations reſounded on all ſides; a numerous proceſſion attended the heralds into the city, and the prince of Wales did not deem it a degradation to accompany it, and to ſtop at the door of the Roſe Tavern, Temple Bar, and drink ſucceſs to the war. The ſtocks, which had been ſome time on the decline, roſe inſtantaneouſly. This unuſual circumſtance, at the opening of a war, was owing to the ſanguine expectation, that hoſtilities would be carried on at the expence of the enemy. The poſſeſſions of Spain in the Weſt Indies were conſidered as likely to fall an eaſy prey to the Britiſh adventurers. The merchants anticipated the monopoly of the commerce with South America, and the poſſeſſions of the mines of Peru and Potoſi. But theſe idle dreams of riches and conqueſt ſoon proved fallacious; what the miniſter had foreſeen, now happened; England ſtood ſingly engaged in war without an ally. Oct. 19. Declaration of war.

The

* It is recorded, that Sir Robert Walpole, hearing the bells ringing, inquired the cauſe of ſuch rejoicings, and was informed that the bells were ringing for the declaration of war. They now *ring* the bells, he replied, but they will ſoon *wring* their hands.

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The Spaniſh manifeſto fully juſtified the conduct of Spain, and proved, that though in the refuſal to pay the £.95,000, ſhe appeared to be the aggreſſor, the Engliſh were the real aggreſſors, and that while affecting to comply with the letter, they had violated the ſpirit of the treaty. France artfully availed herſelf of theſe circumſtances; while ſhe armed both by ſea and land, with a view to intimidate England, and to join Spain, whenever a favourable opportunity ſhould occur, ſhe artfully offered her mediation to compoſe the differences, and prevailed on the Dutch to maintain a ſtate of neutrality, by threatening them with an army of 50,000 men towards the Low Countries, and alluring them with hopes of ſharing the ſpoils of the trade which the Engliſh carried on to Spaniſh America.

Conduct of England:

On reviewing the conduct of England, from the renewal of the diſputes concerning the Spaniſh depredations in 1737, to the declaration of war, we ſhall not heſitate to confeſs, that it was inconſiſtent, unjuſt, haughty, and violent.

The Britiſh nation liſtened only to one ſide of the queſtion, gave implicit credit to all the exaggerated accounts of the cruelties committed by the Spaniards without due evidence, and without noticing the violations of expreſs treaties by the Britiſh traders. The difficulty of obtaining an accurate ſtatement of facts, which had paſſed in the American ſeas, was ſeldom taken into conſideration. Inſtant and full reparation for damages, not ſufficiently authenticated, and always over-rated, was loudly

loudly and repeatedly called for. The cry of *No search* echoed from one part of the kingdom to another, and reverberated from London to Madrid. The common topics of juſtice and humanity were forgotten amidſt the public ardour; a general enthuſiaſm pervaded all ranks of people, and the religious cruſade againſt the Saracens, in an age of bigotry and ignorance, was not proſecuted with greater fervour than the commercial cruſade againſt Spain, in an enlightened century. The crown of Spain was reviled and degraded in the eyes of Europe, by the petulance of declamatory eloquence; imperious meſſages were ſent to Madrid, and the moſt haughty and irritable court in Europe, provoked and inſulted beyond the poſſibility of farther forbearance. Chapter 53. 1739.

The public conduct of the miniſter is alſo liable to much animadverſion, though from a different cauſe. And of Walpole.

Burke ſays, "I obſerved one fault in his general proceeding. He never manfully put forward the entire ſtrength of his cauſe. He temporiſed; he managed; and adopting very nearly the ſentiments of his adverſaries, he oppoſed their inferences. This, for a political commander, is the choice of a weak poſt. His adverſaries had the better of the argument, as he handled it, not as the reaſon and juſtice of his cauſe enabled him to manage it. I ſay this, after having ſeen, and with ſome care examined the original documents, concerning certain important tranſactions of thoſe times. They perfectly

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fectly ſatisfied me of the extreme injuſtice of that war, and of the falſhood of the colours, which, to his own ruin, and guided by a miſtaken policy, he ſuffered to be daubed over that meaſure. Some years after, it was my fortune to converſe with many of the principal actors againſt that miniſter, and with thoſe who principally excited that clamour. None of them, no not one, did in the leaſt defend the meaſure, or attempt to juſtify their conduct, which they as freely condemned as they would have done in commenting upon any proceeding in hiſtory in which they were totally unconcerned. Thus it will be. They who ſtir up the people to improper deſires, whether of peace or war, will be condemned by themſelves. They who weakly yield to them, will be condemned by hiſtory*."

Theſe obſervations are perfectly juſt; but the ſagacious author did not ſufficiently conſider, and perhaps did not know, the delicate ſituation of the miniſter, and the embarraſſments under which he laboured at this particular juncture. Walpole himſelf well knew the ſtrength of the arguments, which might have been produced againſt the aſſertions of the minority. He was aware, that the Britiſh who traded to the Weſt Indies, were principally engaged in carrying on an illicit trade, and in importing and exporting illicit goods; that few of the captures were illegal; and that the Spaniards, though they might in ſome inſtances have tranſgreſſed the bounds

* Thoughts on a Regicide Peace, p. 23.

bounds of ſtrict juſtice, yet in general were ſuffi- Chapter 53.
ciently vindicated by the conduct and behaviour of 1739.
the Britiſh traders.

The fact was, that the nation could not hear the truth; the minds of all men were ſo inflamed with tales of cruelties, that any attempts to contradict them were wholly ineffectual. The miniſter himſelf could not venture to queſtion or decry them.

An inſinuation thrown out by ſome of his friends, that the Britiſh ſhips in the Weſt Indies carried on ſmuggling, contrary to treaties, and to the true intereſt of the fair trader, was received with high indignation, and repreſented by oppoſition, as a reflection caſt upon the whole body of Engliſh merchants in America*. Nor need any other proof be given of the general infatuation and frenzy, which prevented the voice of truth and reaſon from being heard, than that the fable of Jenkins's ears was fully credited, and that no one could venture to call in queſtion the truth of that abſurd ſtory. Walpole was obliged therefore to confine the defence of the convention to the expediency of the meaſure, the inconveniences of war, and the advantages of peace, with ſuch general arguments as were anſwered and nullified by impaſſioned appeals to the feelings and honour of an injured and inſulted nation.

His oppoſition to the war, drew upon him odium and unpopularity from all quarters. Even many of thoſe who voted with him from perſonal conſiderations, were equally free in their complaints of his

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 366.

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his indolence, want of ſpirit, and averſion to vigorous meaſures, for vindicating the national honour, and chaſtiſing the inſolence of Spain.

Inclination of the king.

The king was eager for war. Inſpired by a martial ſpirit and natural magnanimity, he was diſpoſed to ſeek reparation of injuries by military operations, preferably to the ſlower and leſs ſplendid methods of negotiation.

By the death of queen Caroline, Walpole had loſt his principal protectreſs; one who uniformly appreciated his counſels and promoted his views; who maintained in the king's mind thoſe favourable ſentiments, which thoſe who were about his perſon, were labouring to change. Her deceaſe gave full ſcope to the intrigues of a ſtrong party in the cabinet, who inclined for war, and oppoſed thoſe meaſures which the miniſter wiſhed to adopt.

Diviſions in the cabinet.

The duke of Newcaſtle was particularly vehement in ſupporting the contents of the petition, which the merchants had delivered to the king in 1737. In conformity to this ſtatement of the grievances, he drew up an angry memorial, which Keene was ordered to preſent to the Spaniſh miniſters, in which he endeavoured to prove that the Spaniards had broken the articles in ſeveral treaties, and particularly alluded to the treaty of 1667. This memorial * was forwarded to Keene, to be preſented to the court of Madrid, and Horace Walpole was ordered to draw up a ſimilar one, to be preſented to the States General. But the ſagacity of Horace Walpole ſaw the fact in a very different

* Keene and Walpole Papers.

different light. He was fully ſenſible that the treaty of 1667, referred only to the trade which Great Britain was permitted to carry on to the Spaniſh dominions in Europe, and had no reference to the American commerce. This opinion he repreſented with his uſual freedom, and proved by undoubted documents*. Chapter 53. 1739.

Sir Robert Walpole adopted this mode of thinking, and objected to Newcaſtle's memorial. But being unſupported by the king, and the other members of the cabinet, he was compelled to withdraw his oppoſition, and aſſent to the meaſure. Even when the convention was ratified, and the ſettling of the diſputes referred to an amicable compoſition, Newcaſtle adopted the opinions and language of oppoſition, and obſerved, in a letter to the Britiſh miniſter at Madrid:

"His majeſty's view and deſign is, that this commiſſion ſhould not, like ſome former ones, be drawn into length and produce no effect: but that all points in diſpute between the two crowns, may be thoroughly examined, and finally ſettled and adjuſted; ſo that a perfect good underſtanding may be eſtabliſhed between the two nations; *which is impoſſible to be done, as long as the depredations continue in any manner; and therefore the king does expect, that the freedom of navigation of his ſubjects may be effectually ſecured to them; that they may neither be liable to be taken or ſearched in their navigation in the American ſeas, to and from any part of his majeſty's dominions* †. The

* Walpole Papers.

† Duke of Newcaſtle to Benjamin Keene, Whitehall, January 26, 1737-8. Walpole Papers.

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The chancellor, lord Hardwicke, a man of moderation, good ſenſe, and candour, was of the ſame opinion with the duke of Newcaſtle, and ſpoke with ſuch vehemence in the houſe of lords againſt the depredations, and in favour of compulſory meaſures, that Walpole, who ſtood behind the throne, exclaimed to thoſe who were near him, "Bravo colonel Yorke, Bravo*. Lord Harrington inclined to the ſentiments of Newcaſtle and Hardwicke. The earl of Wilmington was always blindly attached to the opinion of the king, and therefore favoured the war. He repented that he had declined accepting the employments which had been offered to him on the death of George the Firſt; his hopes revived on the deceaſe of queen Caroline; he aſpired to the ſtation of firſt miniſter, and by his ſecret influence in the cloſet, occaſionally thwarted and counteracted the advice of Walpole.

The only members of the cabinet of whom Walpole was ſecure, were Sir Charles Wager, the earl of Godolphin, who had ſucceeded lord Lonſdale in the office of privy ſeal, which he retained in compliance with the wiſhes of the miniſter, to whom he was uniformly and inviolably attached, and the duke of Devonſhire, who was occaſionally abſent in Ireland.

Many meaſures were alſo adopted which he did not approve, and many perſons appointed to commands, particularly admiral Vernon, in oppoſition to his wiſhes. The letters of repriſal were iſſued contrary

* From the late earl of Hardwicke.

contrary to his opinion. Newcaſtle had adapted the declaration of war to the public opinion *, in direct contradiction to his known ſentiments, on the baſis of principles which held up the delay of hoſtilities to cenſure, and, as the miniſter thought, with a view to caſt an odium upon him. The declaration had been approved by the cabinet, and was on the point of being iſſued in this form, when a ſtrong remonſtrance of Horace Walpole † to the lord chancellor, induced the ſecretary of ſtate to amend this important paper. Chapter 53. 1739.

A ſtill greater ſource of diſcord had been derived from the reſolution of the miniſter to obtain the privy ſeal for lord Hervey, who had uniformly proved his attachment, and had ſtrenuouſly ſupported his adminiſtration, by ſpeeches, and by his pen. Godolphin, who had ſucceed lord Lonſdale in that high office, had announced his intention of retiring, but delayed the reſignation at the requeſt of Walpole, until the difficulties which obſtructed the nomination of Hervey could be removed. That nobleman had, by his ſarcaſtic and petulant raillery, rendered himſelf ſo highly diſagreeable to Newcaſtle, that in a letter to lord chancellor Hardwicke, he obſerved, "Sir Robert Walpole and Pulteney are not more oppoſite in the houſe of commons, than lord Hervey and I are, with regard to our mutual inclinations to each other, in our houſe ‡. He ſtrongly repreſented the objections to Lord Hervey privy ſeal. In oppoſition to Newcaſtle.

* Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, September 30, 1739.

† Horace Walpole to lord Hardwicke. Correſpondence.

‡ Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, October 14, 1 39. Hardwicke Papers.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

to his promotion, and the ill effects which would be derived from it. He propoſed, rather than ſubmit, that the duke of Grafton, the lord chancellor, his brother Mr. Pelham, and himſelf ſhould reſign; and even if they ſhould not accede to this meaſure, avowed his reſolution ſingly to retire, rather than bear what he conſidered as a perſonal inſult. He made alſo ſtrong remonſtrances on the ſubject to Sir Robert Walpole, and a violent altercation paſſed between them at Claremont. The

April, 1740.

miniſter perſevered in his reſolution. Lord Hervey was at length appointed lord privy ſeal, and Newcaſtle, either finding his co-adjutors not inclined to reſign in compliance with his requeſt, or ſoftened by the chancellor and his brother, ſuppreſſed his diſguſt, and acquieſced in the nomination.

Walpole thwarted by the king.

The ſituation of the miniſter was rendered ſtill more irkſome, by the occaſional ill-humour of the king, who thwarted and counteracted his views, at the very moment when he moſt wanted his aſſiſtance. Several inſtances of a pertinacious refuſal of his juſt requeſts, appeared in the courſe of this ſummer. But one in particular, will ſerve to ſhew the extreme embarraſſments under which he laboured.

Horace Walpole had ſerved, with little interruption, in the quality of envoy, plenipotentiary, or embaſſador, from 1722 to 1739. He had performed his functions with unremitting aſſiduity and addreſs; and had rendered himſelf eminently uſeful in the conduct of foreign affairs. He had

been for ſome time weary of his employment, and expreſſed an earneſt deſire to return to England. On the death of queen Caroline, his ſituation abroad became more difficult. Contradictory orders were occaſionally iſſued from London and Hanover. The opinion and advice which he freely gave, were not always congenial to the king's German prejudices. He incurred diſpleaſure by the frankneſs with which he declared his ſentiments on all occaſions, and the courage with which he oppoſed the petty electoral views, which ſometimes interfered with the grand intereſts of Great Britain and Europe. Frequent bickerings with lord Harrington, rendered his continuance abroad more and more irkſome; he reſiſted all the importunities of his brother, enforced by the earneſt repreſentation of the chancellor, for whom he entertained the higheſt eſteem, and perſevered in his reſolution to retire from the diplomatic line.

Chapter 53. 1729.

The ſtate of affairs, and temper of the Dutch, who were preſſed by England on one ſide, and by France on the other, required a perſon of great abilities, addreſs, and circumſpection, agreeable to the leading men of the republic, well acquainted with the forms of their complicated conſtitution, and capable of obviating the dilatorineſs of their counſels. It was neceſſary alſo, that the ſucceſſor ſhould be attached to the miniſter, and likely to follow the directions of Horace Walpole. Such a perſon was Robert Trevor, ſecond ſon of lord Trevor, who had, from the commencement of Horace Walpole's embaſſy to the Hague, ſerved in the capacity of

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. private ſecretary, and during his abſence, had acted as chargé d'affaires. He was diſtinguiſhed no leſs for his diſcretion than his talents, and his diſpatches were peculiarly intereſting and animated.

But the king had entertained a violent prejudice againſt Trevor, and though he could not with juſtice or policy object to his nomination, yet he clogged his miſſion with ſo many difficulties as nearly prevented it, and when thoſe difficulties were finally overcome, he poſitively refuſed to confer on him the united character of envoy and plenipotentiary, with the ſalary of eight pounds a day, but inſiſted that he ſhould be only appointed envoy, with a ſalary of no more than five pounds. The repeated ſolicitations of Walpole, in compliance with his brother's wiſhes, had no effect, all his attempts to perſuade the king were ineffectual.

Trevor had received from Horace Walpole a promiſe of his recommendation, and as he knew the affection of Sir Robert Walpole for his brother, and believed his influence all powerful in the cloſet, he had conſidered his appointment to the offices of envoy and plenipotentiary, as certain as if it had paſſed the great ſeal. When, therefore, the miniſter acquainted him with the king's inflexibility, he declined accepting the grant of envoy alone, as degrading to himſelf, and declared that, on account of the ſmallneſs of his own fortune, the ſalary of five pounds a day was inſufficient to maintain an eſtabliſhment, in a ſtyle and manner conformable to uſage, and conſonant to the dignity of his ſtation.

The

The miniſter never felt himſelf more chagrined. He was concerned leſt his brother, ſhould impute to him a lukewarmneſs in promoting his friend, and procuring a poſt which had been ſolemnly promiſed. He was apprehenſive leſt Trevor, conceiving his influence over the king greater than it really was, ſhould ſuſpect him of duplicity, and he was at the ſame time convinced, that no perſon was ſo proper to be employed at the Hague. He therefore frankly repreſented his ſituation to his brother; he expreſſed his inability to prevail over the king, and intimated, that ſhould Trevor decline the appointment of envoy, the conſequence would be the increaſe of the king's diſguſt, and the nomination of another perſon, who might be both incapable of diſcharging his functions, and be diſagreeable to them. He therefore earneſtly entreated his brother to obtain the acquieſcence of his friend. His exhortation prevailed; Trevor, at the ſuggeſtion of Horace Walpole, complied and ſucceeded him at the Hague, in the quality of envoy only. Chapter 53. 1739.

Horace Walpole returned to England, and ſoon afterwards reſigned the place of cofferer of the houſehold for a tellerſhip of the exchequer. He took no farther ſhare in public buſineſs, than in giving his aſſiſtance to his brother in the management of foreign affairs, and ſtrenuouſly ſupporting his meaſures in parliament.

Thus ſituated, and thus embarraſſed, thwarted by the king, counteracted by the cabinet, reviled by the nation, and compelled to declare war againſt his own opinion, a ſimple and natural queſtion ariſes; Offers to reſign.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. ariſes; Why did he not reſign? Why did he ſtill maintain a poſt expoſed to ſo many difficulties, and ſubject to ſo much obloquy? His intimate friends urged him to take this ſtep, when the convention was carried in the houſe of commons by a majority of 28. In fact, he did requeſt the king's permiſſion to reſign *. He ſtated his embarraſſments: He obſerved, that his oppoſition to this war would be always imputed as a crime, and that any ill ſucceſs in carrying it on would be attributed to him. The king remonſtrated againſt this reſolution, exclaiming, "Will you deſert me in my greateſt difficulties?" and refuſed to admit his reſignation. The miniſter reiterated his wiſhes, and the king again impoſed ſilence in ſo authoritative a manner, that he acquieſced, and remained at the helm.

But his compliance with the king's commands is by no means ſufficient for his juſtification. Had he come forward on this occaſion, and declared that he had oppoſed the war as unjuſt, and contrary to the intereſts of his country; but finding that the voice of the people was clamorous for hoſtilities, he had therefore quitted a ſtation which he could not preſerve with dignity, as he was unwilling to conduct the helm of government, when he could not guide it at his own diſcretion, and to be reſponſible for meaſures which he did not approve: Had he acted this noble and dignified part, he would have riſen in the opinion of his own

* Correſpondence between Horace Walpole and Etough. Walpole and Etough Papers.

own age, and have ſecured the applauſe of poſterity. Chapter 53. 1739.

The conſequence of his continuance in office was repeated mortifications from thoſe with whom he acted, and inſults from thoſe who oppoſed him, and that in leſs than two years from this period, he was reduced to a compulſory reſignation.

The truth is, that he had neither reſolution or inclination to perſevere in a ſacrifice which circumſtances ſeemed to require, and to quit a ſtation which long poſſeſſion had endeared to him. But miniſters are but men; human nature does not reach to perfection; and who ever quitted power without a ſigh, or looked back to it without regret?

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-FOURTH;

1739—1741.

Meeting of Parliament.—Return of the Seceders.—Efforts of Oppoſition.—Embarraſſments of Walpole.—Supplies.—Capture of Porto-Bello.—Expedition to America.—Altercations in the Cabinet.—Foreign Affairs.—Death of the King of Pruſſia.—Of the Emperor.—Invaſion of Sileſia.

THE declaration of war rendered it neceſſary that the parliament ſhould be aſſembled at an earlier ſeaſon than uſual. The king, in his ſpeech from the throne, ſpoke a language which could not have been ſtronger, had it been dictated by oppoſition. In the opening, he obſerved, "The preſent poſture of our affairs has obliged me to call

Meeting of parliament, November 15. King's ſpeech.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. call you together at this time, ſooner than has been uſual of late years, that I may have the immediate advice and aſſiſtance of my parliament, at this critical and important conjuncture. I have, in all my proceedings with the court of Spain, acted agreeably to the ſenſe of both houſes, and therefore I can make no doubt, but I ſhall meet with a ready and vigorous ſupport in this juſt and neceſſary war, which the repeated injuries and violence committed by that nation upon the navigation and commerce of theſe kingdoms, and their obſtinacy and notorious violation of the moſt ſolemn engagements, have rendered unavoidable."

He then mentioned the augmentation of his forces, and his confidence in being furniſhed with the neceſſary ſupplies. After adverting to the heats and animoſities which had, with the greateſt induſtry, been fomented throughout the kingdom, and had chiefly encouraged the proceedings of the court of Spain, he concluded by obſerving, "Union among all thoſe who have nothing at heart but the true intereſt of Great Britain, and a becoming zeal in the defence of my kingdoms, and in the ſupport of the common cauſe of our country, with as general a concurrence in carrying on the war, as there has appeared for engaging in it, will make the court of Spain repent the wrongs they have done us; and convince thoſe, who mean the ſubverſion of the preſent eſtabliſhment, that this nation is determined, and able, both to vindicate their injured honour, and to defend themſelves againſt

againſt all our open and ſecret enemies, both at home and abroad *." Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

In the houſe of lords, the addreſs paſſed, though not without much altercation from the peers in oppoſition, at the mention of heats and animoſities, and on a diviſion, the numbers were 68 againſt 41 †. Proceedings of the lords. November.

In the commons it occaſioned a warm and violent debate, which did not ſo much relate to the ſubject of the addreſs, as to the return of the ſeceding members to their duty. Mr. Archer having moved the addreſs, which was as uſual the echo of the ſpeech, Pulteney began by vindicating the ſeceſſion. He enforced the neceſſity of that meaſure, for the purpoſe of clearing their characters to poſterity, from the imputation of ſitting in an aſſembly, where a determined majority gave a ſanction to meaſures evidently diſgraceful to the king and the nation. "This ſtep," he ſaid, "however it has been hitherto cenſured, will I hope, for the future, be treated in a different manner, for it is fully juſtified by the declaration of war, ſo univerſally approved, that any farther vindication will be ſuperfluous. There is not an aſſertion maintained in it, that was not, almoſt in the ſame words, inſiſted upon by thoſe who oppoſed the convention. Since that time, there has not one event happened that was not then foreſeen and foretold. But give me leave to ſay, Sir, that though the treatment which we have ſince received from Of the commons.

* Journals. Chandler.

† Lords' Debates.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. from the court of Spain, may have ſwelled the account, yet it has furniſhed us with no new reaſon for declaring war; the ſame provocations have only been repeated, and nothing but longer patience has added to the juſtice of our cauſe. The ſame violation of treaties, the ſame inſtances of injuſtice and barbarity, the ſame diſregard to the law of nations, which are laid down as the reaſons of this declaration, were then too flagrant to be denied, and too contemptuous to be borne. Nor can any one reaſon be alledged for juſtifying our going to war now, that was not of equal force before the convention. After that was ratified, and after the addreſs of parliament to his majeſty on that head, there was indeed ſome ſort of pretext for not cemmencing hoſtilities, becauſe you had laid yourſelves under a kind of obligation, to ſee if the court of Spain would fulfil their part of the ſtipulations; but this was a reaſon that could have no place before that conduct was entered into and approved. It is therefore evident, that if the war be now neceſſary, it was neceſſary before the convention. Of this neceſſity the gentlemen (known, however improperly, by the name of *Seceders*) were then fully convinced. They ſaw, inſtead of that ardour of reſentment, and that zeal for the honour of Britain, which ſuch indignities ought to have produced, nothing but meanneſs, and tameneſs, and ſubmiſſion; and the natural conſequences, a low, temporary expedient, a ſhameful convention, a convention, which had the Spaniards not madly broken it, muſt have ended in our ruin, muſt have thrown

thrown our own navigation into the hands of our enemies. To ſuch a conduct as this they could give no ſanction; they ſaw that all oppoſition was ineffectual, and that their preſence was only made uſe of, that what was already determined might be ratified by the plauſible appearance of a fair debate. They therefore ſeceded, if that word muſt be uſed on this occaſion, and refuſed to countenance meaſures which they could neither approve nor defeat. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

"The ſtate of affairs is now changed; the meaſures of the miniſtry are now altered; and the ſame regard for the honour and welfare of their country, that determined theſe gentlemen to withdraw their countenance from ſuch a conduct as they thought had a tendency to deſtroy them, the ſame has brought them hither once more, to give their advice and aſſiſtance in thoſe meaſures, which they then pointed out, as the only means of aſſerting and retrieving them." He then obſerved, that the only method to preſerve the trade and navigation of Great Britain from any future violation, was to attack the Spaniſh ſettlements in the Weſt Indies, and to prevent any miniſter from giving up our conqueſts, under any pretence whatſoever; declared his readineſs to ſupport miniſtry in carrying on the war with vigour and advantage; expreſſed his wiſhes, that no mention had been made of heats and animoſities in the king's ſpeech, and thought that the dignity and reputation of the houſe would be conſulted, if the addreſs ſhould take no notice of that clauſe in the ſpeech *.

To

* Chandler.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. To this Sir Robert Walpole replied: "After what paſſed laſt ſeſſion, and after the repeated declarations of the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt, and his friends, I little expected that we ſhould have this ſeſſion been again favoured with their company. I am always pleaſed, Sir, when I ſee gentlemen in the way of their duty, and glad that theſe gentlemen have returned to their's; though, to ſay the truth, I was in no great concern leſt the ſervice either of his majeſty or the nation ſhould ſuffer by their abſence. I believe the nation is generally ſenſible, that the many uſeful and popular acts which paſſed towards the end of laſt ſeſſion, were greatly forwarded and facilitated by the ſeceſſion of theſe gentlemen, and if they are returned only to oppoſe and perplex, I ſhall not at all be ſorry if they ſecede again.

"The honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt ſaid, that they took this ſtep, becauſe he and his friends conceived that meaſures were purſued which tended to ruin the honour and intereſt of this nation, and that they have returned to their duty, becauſe theſe meaſures are now at an end Sir, I don't remember any one ſtep which was taken in the whole of our tranſactions with Spain, that has not been fully canvaſſed in parliament, and as fully approved. The parliament can beſt judge what is fit or not fit to be done, and while I have the honour of bearing any ſhare in the adminiſtration I ſhall think myſelf ſafe, and my actions compleatly juſtified, if they are, after mature deliberation, approved by a Britiſh parliament. The

ſtale

ſtale argument of corruption never ſhall have any weight with me; it has been the common refuge of the diſappointed and diſaffected ever ſince government had a being; and it is an accuſation, that like all other charges, though unſupported by proof, if advanced againſt the beſt and moſt diſintereſted adminiſtration, and puſhed with a becoming violence, a pretended zeal for the public good, will never fail to meet applauſe among the populace. I cannot, however, believe that the honourable gentleman and his friends, have found any reaſon to boaſt of the effects produced by their ſeceſſion upon the minds of the people, for it was a very new way of defending the intereſts of their conſtituents, to deſert them when they apprehended them to be endangered. I ſhould not have touched ſo much upon this ſubject, had I not been in a manner called upon to do it, by what fell from the honourable gentleman who ſpoke laſt. I ſhall now proceed to take ſome notice of what he further advanced. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

"The declaration of war againſt Spain, is neither more nor leſs than the conſequence, which the king again and again informed this houſe, would ariſe from the Spaniards perſiſting in their refuſal to do juſtice to his injured ſubjects; and what the honourable gentleman has ſaid upon that head, amounts to nothing more than that, after the Spaniards had abſolutely refuſed to do that juſtice, his majeſty proceeded to thoſe meaſures which he had then more than once promiſed to take. I am ſorry that the honourable gentle-

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. man ſhould ſo far diſtruſt the royal aſſurances, as rather to abſent himſelf from his duty as a member of this houſe, than put any confidence in his majeſty's promiſe. But give me leave to ſay, Sir, that, from the well known character of his majeſty, this declaration of war is no more than what the honourable gentleman and his friends had not only reaſon, but a right to expect, even at the time of their receſſion, if the continued injuſtice of the court of Spain ſhould make it neceſſary to have recourſe to arms. So that upon the whole, I neither ſee how his majeſty's not iſſuing this declaration of war, when they were pleaſed to require it, was a good reaſon for their running from their duty; nor how its being iſſued at laſt is any apology for their return *."

After a few reflections on the impropriety of Pulteney's propoſals, and ſome obſervations by Sir John Barnard, on the want of convoys, which were anſwered by Sir Charles Wager, the addreſs was carried without a diviſion.

The conduct of the miniſter during this whole ſeſſion, proved the extreme embarraſſments under which he laboured, the little dependence he could generally place on thoſe who ſupported him, and the effect which the public voice had upon the deciſions of the commons.

Bill for encouragement of ſeamen. Nov. 16. When Pulteney moved to bring in the bill for the ſecurity of trade and encouragement of ſeamen, which had been thrown out laſt ſeſſion by the exertions of the miniſter, he oppoſed it with much

* Chandler.

much warmth, and demanded that the meaſure ſhould be poſtponed for the purpoſe of taking it into conſideration *. On the firſt reading, however, he did not venture to continue his oppoſition, and after a ſlight animadverſion by Horace Walpole, it paſſed without a diviſion. Although the miniſter appreciated the injuſtice of depriving the public of all ſhare in the prize money, and of annihilating at once a great ſource of revenue, which might aſſiſt government in carrying on the war, yet he dreaded to reſiſt ſo popular a meaſure, and to offend the navy of England. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741. Nov. 26.

The agreement of the miniſter to the war, and the vigorous manner in which it was conducted, diſtreſſed oppoſition, by taking from them the moſt popular topic of declamation and obloquy. They endeavoured, therefore, to introduce motions of ſo violent a tendency, as ſhould preclude all hopes of a reconciliation with Spain, truſting that the miniſter would oppoſe them as being contradictory to his pacific ſyſtem, and would by that reſiſtance increaſe the national averſion. Accordingly, Sir William Wyndham, after a violent philippic againſt adminiſtration, moved for an addreſs, teſtifying a reſolution to ſupport the king in the proſecution of the war, and beſeeching him "never to admit of any treaty of peace with Spain, unleſs the acknowledgment of our natural and indubitable right to navigate in the American ſeas, to and from any part of his majeſty's dominions, without being ſearched, viſited, or ſtopped, under Addreſs to the king. February 21. 1740.

* Chandler.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

under any pretence whatſoever, ſhall have been firſt obtained, as a preliminary thereto *."

As the tendency of this motion was well underſtood by the miniſter, and as it was made with the hopes of being rejected, he diſappointed their views. After briefly vindicating his conduct from the reproaches of Sir William Wyndham, he declared that he was the firſt to agree to the motion, and it accordingly paſſed, without a diſſenting voice. The concurrence of the lords being obtained, the addreſs was accordingly preſented by both houſes.

Place bill rejected.

February.

When the place bill was brought before the houſe, the miniſter departed from his uſual cuſtom, of giving only his ſilent vote; he ſpoke againſt it with great ſtrength of argument. All his efforts, however, could only procure a ſmall majority of 16; 222 againſt 206 †. The cauſe of this numerous minority, was principally owing to the approach of a general election, which influenced many who favoured adminiſtration, to vote for the queſtion.

Bill for regiſtering ſeamen.

The efforts of oppoſition compelled him to relinquiſh a bill, to which he had paid conſiderable attention, and which he thought eſſentially neceſſary for the ſpeedy equipment of the fleet. Government felt ſenſible inconveniences from their inability to man their ſhips of war. According to an account given in laſt year, upon a medium no more than twenty-one thouſand five hundred and

* Journals. Tindal.

† Journals. Chandler, vol. 11. where ſee Walpole's admirable ſpeech on the occaſion, p. 233.

and ſixteen ſeamen had been muſtered on board the royal navy, from the 31ſt of December 1738 to the 31ſt of December 1739. The public clamour at the ſame time, on account of the numerous captures made by the Spaniards, hourly increaſing, produced many warm petitions and remonſtrances. The method of impreſſing, ſerved only to increaſe the diſcontent of the merchants, who were perpetually plying both houſes of parliament with complaints that their trade was neglected. The matter was therefore referred to a committee, who found invincible obſtacles in their endeavours to remedy the inconvenience any other way, than by eſtabliſhing a general regiſter of all ſeamen and watermen capable of ſervice. A bill to this effect was accordingly preſented to the houſe by Sir Charles Wager *. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741. February 5.

The oppoſition fairly allowed the expediency of the bill, but expatiated with great effect on the hardſhips which it would entail upon the ſeaman, who muſt appear whenever ſummoned, at all hazards, whatever might be the circumſtances of his family, or the ſtate of his private affairs; he muſt, in many caſes, expoſe himſelf to the penalties of the act, or leave his family at a time when his aſſiſtance and direction were abſolutely neceſſary. He muſt, if he ſhould by any misfortune or negligence, be encumbered with debt, either fall under the diſtreſſes which the breach of this law would bring upon him, or lie at the mercy

* Tindal, p. 450. Chandler.

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mercy of his creditors, perhaps exaſperated by long diſappointments, or by long practice of ſeverity hardened in oppreſſion. Pulteney propoſed to defer the ſecond reading a few days, and to print the bill for the conſideration of the houſe.

To theſe arguments the miniſter replied, by declaring that the impreſs of ſeamen, to which government muſt always have recourſe in times of emergency, was neither eligible or legal, that it was ineffectual and inſufficient for the attainment of its end; that the delay in procuring ſailors at the commencement of a war, was a general grievance and a great obſtruction to offenſive operations, and to the acquiſition of conqueſts which would be eaſy at firſt, but afterwards became difficult. "While we are publiſhing proclamations," he ſaid, "iſſuing warrants for impreſſes, and gleaning up our ſailors by ſingle men, our ſecrets are betrayed, and our enterprizes defeated." He did not, however, object to the propoſal for printing the bill, and delaying the ſecond reading a proper time, which was ordered accordingly.

During this ſuſpenſion, great outcry was raiſed againſt the bill, as founded on French edicts, and as tending to the introduction of French meaſures and French deſpotiſm, and the reſtrictions which it would have impoſed on the ſailors, which were not inconſiderable, were as uſual magnified and exaggerated. The public mind was inflamed to ſuch a degree, that when preſented to be read a ſecond time, it was received with a ſilent horror, as a tranſcript of the French edict for the ſame

purport, and tending to enſlave the moſt uſeful body of men in the kingdom. Sir Charles Wager and Sir John Norris, who had prepared the bill, candidly admitted the charge, that it was founded on a ſimilar ordinance, but declared that it was the only expedient which they could deviſe, to effect the purpoſe for which it was deſigned. The miniſter, however, was diſinclined to ſupport a bill, againſt which ſuch ſtrong objections were made. He was therefore one of the firſt to ſuggeſt the propriety of dropping it, and it was accordingly rejected. "A motion was then made for the houſe to reſolve itſelf into a committee the Monday following, to conſider of the heads of a bill, for the further and better encouragement of ſeamen to enter into his majeſty's ſervice; but this reſolution, however well intended, never produced the deſired effect, though it ſeemed to be agreed upon by all parties, that a regiſter was abſolutely neceſſary; and the firſt reſolution which the committee came to, March the 13th, was, that a voluntary regiſter of ſeamen would be of great utility to the kingdom *."

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Dropped.

The opponents of the miniſter, ſenſible that he was not adequately ſupported, preſſed him with motions tending to increaſe his embarraſſment. Some prizes having been taken by the Spaniards, a motion

Motion for cruizers. March 23.

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 451. Sir Charles Wager introduced a ſimilar bill in the next ſeſſion, though with an alteration of the moſt exceptionable parts. Every paragraph was obſtinately conteſted. Some exceptionable clauſes were corrected, and ſeveral amendments made; after a long and well fought oppoſition, it paſſed by 155 againſt 79.

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a motion was made in the houſe of commons, "For a liſt of ſhips of war employed as cruizers, for the protection of trade on this ſide Cape Finiſterre, ſince the 10th of July laſt, diſtinguiſhing the time each ſhip was ordered to remain, and the time ſuch ſhip did actually remain on ſuch cruize, together with the reaſons of her returning to any port of this kingdom." But as the rejection of this motion was highly arraigned, the miniſter agreed the following day to addreſs the king "to give directions, that beſides the ſhips of war employed againſt the enemy, a ſufficient number of ſhips may be appointed to cruize in proper ſtations, for the effectual protection of trade." The public was extremely ſurpriſed that the miniſtry ſuffered this motion to paſs, as it carried an oblique reflection upon themſelves. But the truth was, that about this time, both the French and Dutch, under pretext of neutrality, had commenced carriers to the Spaniards, and upon being ſtopped and viſited by the Britiſh ſhips, had made ſtrong complaints that ſuch practices were not warranted by the laws of nations, or by treaties. The court of England in anſwer, told them, that their complaints ſhould be examined, but choſe to leave it to the parliament, to expreſs the ſenſe of the public, in a matter that ſo nearly touched the national intereſt. When the addreſs was preſented, the king replied, "All poſſible care has been taken in carrying on the war againſt Spain, in the moſt proper and effectual manner, and at the ſame time, for protecting the trade of my ſubjects;

jects; and you may be assured, that the same care shall be continued." In consequence of this address, however, the building of twenty gun ships to act against the enemy's privateers was hastened, and six ships of war, and store ships were sent to reinforce admiral Haddock in the Mediterranean *. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

But a still more dangerous measure was enforced by the opposition, which I shall give in the words of the contemporary historian so often quoted. "An embargo upon all shipping, except coasters, had continued, by order of the lords of the admiralty, from the 1st of February to the 28th of March, when a petition from the merchants and owners of ships, and others concerned in manufactures and commerce, was sent to the house of commons, complaining of the great hardships the continuance of the embargo brought upon trade in general; and containing some insinuations as if it had been continued through wantonness. The fact was, that the petitioners had been amongst the loudest in the outcry raised against government for not protecting their trade; and as that clamour increased, the necessity of employing more seamen increased likewise. The lords of the admiralty had employed every fair means in their power to procure seamen, but without success, till they were reduced to the disagreeable alternative of either imposing the embargo, or permitting the service of the public to suffer. To give all the ease, however, in their power to trade, they soon took Petition against the embargo.

* Tindal.

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took off the embargo on foreign ſhips, and acquainted the maſters of Britiſh ſhips, that they were willing to take it off entirely, if every maſter, or merchant, or owner of a ſhip, would, in proportion to their number of hands, contribute to the ſupply of the navy. Though nothing could be more reaſonable, and indeed, neceſſary, than this conduct, yet it was repreſented, in the anti-miniſterial ſpeeches and writings, as an intolerable oppreſſion upon commerce, calculated with a view to make the city of London, and the trading part of the nation, weary of the war. The miniſtry, however, did not think fit to comply with the prayer of the petition, which was, to be heard by counſel againſt the embargo. They very juſtly thought, that to admit counſel on ſuch a head, was ſtripping his majeſty and the government of one of their moſt unqueſtionable prerogatives; and the motion was therefore rejected by a majority of 166 againſt 95. This ſeaſonable firmneſs of the government was attended with very good effects; for the merchants, at laſt, agreed to carry one third of their crew landſmen, and to furniſh one man in four to the king's ſhips; upon which condition their ſhips had protections granted them, and about the 14th of April, the embargo was taken off from all merchants ſhips in the ports of Great Britain and Ireland outward bound *."

Supplies.

Almoſt the only propoſals of the miniſter which the minority did not reſiſt, were thoſe which related to ſupplies. In this inſtance they were as liberal

* Tindal. vol. 20. p. 456.

liberal in granting the public money, as if they had forgotten their own repeated aſſertions, that the nation had been ſo much impoveriſhed by Walpole, that it could not bear any farther burthens. The land tax was raiſed to four ſhillings in the pound: twelve hundred thouſand pounds were taken from the ſinking fund, and the whole amount of the ſupplies came to £. 4,059,722. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

Many excellent laws in favour of commerce and navigation were paſſed during this ſeſſion, and premiums were continued for the importation of maſts, pitch, and tar; for encouraging the Greenland fiſhery, by allowing an additional bounty to all ſhips employed in the whale fiſhery during the war, and for protecting the men from being impreſſed. Bounties.

Not long before the prorogation of parliament, the news of the capture of Porto Bello, by Vernon, reached London; and as the admiral was ſtrongly ſupported by oppoſition, and conſidered as perſonally obnoxious to the miniſter, ſo favourable an opportunity of diſtreſſing him, was not omitted. Capture of Porto Bello.

During the public rejoicings, the houſe of lords ſent an addreſs to the commons for their concurrence, in which they congratulated the king on the glorious ſucceſs of his arms under the command of admiral Vernon, by taking Porto Bello with only ſix ſhips of war. When the addreſs was brought to the commons, the words, with ſix ſhips of war only, were omitted. "But ſeveral of Vernon's friends, who had heard him declare in the houſe, that he could take Porto Bello with that force, inſiſted March.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. ſiſted upon the inſertion of thoſe words. They were oppoſed by the few of the miniſterial party who were in the houſe, who thought they conveyed a reproachful inſinuation againſt the memory of admiral Hoſier, and could only ſerve to revive the animoſities of the public; but the addition being inſiſted upon, it was carried by 36 againſt 31, and being agreed to by the peers, was preſented accordingly." It is juſtly obſerved by Tindal, "A Roman conſul, after reducing a province, never received greater marks of public applauſe from his country, than admiral Vernon did upon the demolition of Porto Bello. His name, not only amongſt the lower, but the moſt diſtinguiſhed ranks, became proverbial for courage; his exploit was exaggerated beyond meaſure; meanings were ſuggeſted that never were intended, and conſequences were drawn that never followed. The oppoſition, who counted upon Vernon as a creature of their own preferring, reſolved to avail themſelves of his name, and ſome of their heads entered into a correſpondence with him, which has been ſince publiſhed, and in which they repreſented the miniſter and his friends, as ſecret enemies to his perſon and ſucceſs, and themſelves as the patrons of his glory, and the ſureties for his conduct to the public. A man of Vernon's warm conſtitution and reſentful temper, could not but be affected with thoſe repreſentations which he thought came from his friends; and he conceived a deep diſlike to every perſon employed, and every meaſure concerted for the public ſervice, becauſe he thought all came from the miniſter or his friends;

friends; and indeed, moſt of the terrible misfortunes that afterwards attended the Britiſh arms in America, were owing to his invincible prepoſſeſſions*." Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

An expedition was prepared to intercept the Spaniſh fleet, which was ready to ſail from Ferrol; the command was given to Sir John Norris, and the duke of Cumberland ſerved on board the Victory as a volunteer. The accident of two ſhips running foul, and the prevalence of contrary winds, fruſtrated the object of the armament, and they were obliged to remain in Torbay, till intelligence was received that the Spaniſh fleet had proceeded for America. A ſmall ſquadron, commanded by commodore Anſon, ſailed for the South Sea, and to aſſiſt Vernon. But the greateſt expectation was excited by a formidable fleet of ſeven-and-twenty ſhips of the line, beſides frigates, fire ſhips, bomb ketches, and tenders, equipped for the attack of the northern coaſt of New Spain, which ſailed under Sir Chaloner Ogle. In the Weſt Indies they joined Vernon, who aſſumed the command, and united to this formidable fleet, his own ſucceſsful ſquadron. The troops on board were commanded by lord Cathcart, but he unfortunately died at Dominica, and was ſucceeded by general Wentworth, between whom and the admiral an implacable animoſity ſubſiſted. To this is aſcribed the failure of the enterprize, though, undoubtedly, many natural cauſes of ſickneſs, and bad weather, materially co-operated. The reſtraint the commanders Expeditions to America.

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 456.

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manders felt in acting, from their uncertainty with reſpect to the intentions of the French, who had a ſtrong ſquadron in thoſe ſeas under the marquis d'Antin, and who uſed every artifice and fineſſe they thought themſelves ſafe in diſplaying, was alſo a principal cauſe of the ill ſucceſs. Vernon made an attempt on Carthagena, which with all the force he poſſeſſed, and the advantage of being reſtrained by no ſpecific orders, was unſucceſsful and inglorious. The captures which were made at ſea, far from having a good effect, created animoſities between the ſoldiers and ſailors. Sickneſs raged, and a great mortality prevailed; an unſucceſsful attempt on the iſland of Cuba, completed the chagrin, diſappointment, and impatience of the men, and this powerful fleet, the operations of which had fixed the attention of all Europe, and made the friends of Spain deſpair of her empire in the New World, returned to England without having performed any thing to compenſate for the expence of its equipment *.

Not to interrupt the thread of the narrative, I have thus brought down the account of theſe expeditions, the failure of which drew ſo much unmerited cenſure on the adminiſtration of Walpole, to a period poſterior to the events immediately under conſideration.

Diviſions in the cabinet.

Soon after the prorogation of parliament, and the king's departure for Hanover, the diviſion in the cabinet increaſed to ſo high a degree, that at one time, the continuance of Walpole and Newcaſtle

* Tindal.

caſtle in office ſeemed incompatible; and it appears that Walpole, notwithſtanding the approach of a new parliament, had reſolved to obtain his diſmiſſion, even in the king's abſence. A temporary reconciliation was, however, effected, by the intervention of Horace Walpole, Pelham, and lord Hardwicke, and promiſes were made on both ſides to act with renewed cordiality. But the promiſes of ſtateſmen are fickle, and ſoon forgotten. Although a diſſolution of the miniſtry was prevented, yet the ſame jealouſy ſtill ſubſiſted. The moſt violent and indecorous altercations took place at the meeting of the lords of regency; and after the return of the king, even in the antichamber. Walpole ſeems occaſionally to have loſt his uſual moderation and good temper, and to have adopted the peeviſh fretfulneſs of Newcaſtle. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

It was the object of Newcaſtle to ſend all the ſhips which could be ſpared to America, for the purpoſe of enſuring ſucceſs to the expedition in that quarter. Walpole thought that the affairs of Europe were too *much* ſacrificed to thoſe of America, and was apprehenſive leſt the coaſt of England ſhould be left expoſed. The Grafton, a ſhip of 70 guns, being diſabled from going to the Weſt Indies, it was propoſed in the council of regency, to ſend the Saliſbury, a 60 gun ſhip, in her room. To this the miniſter objected, and peeviſhly exclaimed, "What, may not one poor ſhip be left at home? Muſt every accident be riſqued for the Weſt Indies, and no conſideration paid to this country?"

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country?" Newcaſtle having replied, that the number of Sir Chaloner Ogle's ſquadron ought not to be diminiſhed, Walpole made a long ſpeech, in the courſe of which, he exclaimed with great heat, "I oppoſe nothing, I give into every thing, am ſaid to do every thing, am to anſwer for every thing, and yet, God knows, I dare not do what I think right. I am of opinion for leaving more ſhips of Sir Chaloner Ogle's ſquadron behind; but I *dare not*, I *will not*, make any alteration;" and when the archbiſhop of Canterbury propoſed that the matter ſhould be taken into conſideration another day, he oppoſed it, and ſaid, "Let them go, let them go*."

But a ſcene of ſtill more petulant altercation took place ſoon after the king's return from Hanover. A difference of opinion had prevailed in the cabinet, concerning the mode of applying to the courts of Vienna, Berlin, and Peterſburgh, in which the ſentiments of Walpole had been over-ruled, and he bitterly complained to the king, that the diviſions of the cabinet obſtructed public buſineſs. In the next audience, the king remonſtrated with the duke of Newcaſtle and Harrington; and ſaid, "As to the buſineſs in parliament, I do not value the oppoſition, if all my ſervants act together, and are united; but if they thwart one another, and create difficulties in tranſacting public buſineſs, then indeed it will be another caſe." Coming out of the cloſet, the duke met Walpole, and mentioned the diſagreeable expreſſions which he had juſt

* The duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, October 1, 1740. Hardwicke Papers.

juſt heard, inſinuating, in reproachful language, that they had been adopted at his ſuggeſtion. Walpole denied the imputation, though he acknowledged that he agreed in the ſentiment. Newcaſtle ſaid, "When meaſures are agreed amongſt us, it is very right that every body ſhould ſupport them, but not to have the liberty of giving one's opinion before they are agreed, is very wrong." Walpole indignantly replied, "What do you mean? The war is your's. You have had the conduct of it. I wiſh you joy of it." The duke denied the fact, and they parted in mutual diſguſt*. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

The ſituation of continental affairs was not ſuch as to compenſate for the miſcarriages in America, or to aſſiſt in compoſing the growing feuds in the cabinet. Situation of foreign affairs.

An apparent harmony and good underſtanding had continued between the courts of Verſailles and St. James's, during the progreſs of the negotiation which terminated in the peace between the Emperor and the allies. Fleury and Walpole, both anxious to maintain tranquillity, courted each other with affected expreſſions of good will and amity; and lord Waldegrave, the channel of their mutual intercourſe, ably ſeconded the views of the Britiſh miniſter. The diſmiſſion of Chauvelin, which had been chiefly occaſioned or precipitated by the repreſentations of Waldegrave, did not render the French cabinet intrinſically more favourable to Efforts of France.

* The duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, October 25, 1740.

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to England. Amelot, who ſucceeded him, was of a pliant diſpoſition, and wholly ſubſervient to Fleury. The two nations were as oppoſite in their political ſentiments, as their ſhores to each other*. During the progreſs of the diſputes with Spain, Fleury affected to act a conciliating part, and tendered his good offices; but when the rupture took place, the French, however inclined to aſſiſt Spain, were not, from the decline of their naval force, in a condition to come forward with effect and energy. But when Fleury, deriving fond expectations from the pacific ſentiments of Walpole, attempted to intimidate England, by declaring that any conqueſts in Spaniſh America ſhould be the ſignal of immediate hoſtilities, and would inevitably bring on a general war in Europe, the Britiſh cabinet ſpurned at theſe menaces, and continued the expeditions to the Weſt Indies. Alarmed at this unexpected firmneſs, Fleury anxiouſly propoſed the mediation of France, and even offered to ſecure the payment of the £.95,000, which the king of Spain had refuſed to liquidate. But ſuch was the temper of the Engliſh nation, and ſuch the rancour againſt Spain, that the miniſter, however well inclined to an accommodation, could not venture to liſten to any propoſal of peace, and the mediation was declined.

The French cabinet foreſeeing, that if no compromiſe was effected, hoſtilities were inevitable, concluded, in the midſt of their amicable overtures to England, a family compact with Spain, laboured

* Littora Littoribus contraria.

laboured in every part of Europe to form alliances, and to isolate England from the continent. They influenced, either in a direct or indirect manner, the wavering and pusillanimous counsels of the Dutch republic, who weakly considered the Spanish war as foreign to their interests as a dispute between Nadir Shah and the Great Mogul. They governed Sweden and directed the Porte; swayed the Imperial cabinet, and gave an impulse to most of the German princes. Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741.

Walpole, aware of these intrigues and efforts, counteracted them by similar exertions. Subsidiary treaties were made with Denmark, and with the king of Sweden, as Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, by which 6,000 Danes and 6,000 Hessians were to be held in readiness to be taken into British pay. Trevor, who had succeeded Horace Walpole at the Hague, strained every nerve to rouse the Dutch from their supineness and apathy. The British minister at St. Petersburgh, acquired an ascendency in the Russian cabinet, and Robinson succeeded in rouzing the Emperor to a sense of the disgraceful situation into which he had been plunged by the ascendency of French counsels, and in stimulating his fears and jealousies at the boundless ambition of the house of Bourbon. Counter efforts of England.

In the midst of these transactions, the death of Frederick-William, king of Prussia, opened a new scene of intrigue and exertion between the two rival courts, and Berlin became the center of negotiations which were to pacify or convulse Europe. Frederick-William, who united the discordant qua- Death of the king of Prussia.

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lities of a pacific and military ſovereign, and who loved the image, while he dreaded the reality of war, had continued, almoſt during his whole reign, in a ſtate of wiſe but calumniated inaction. His ſon and ſucceſſor, Frederick the Second, whom poets and hiſtorians have ſtyled *the Great*, was a prince of aſpiring ambition, and poſſeſſed of talents, equally calculated for negotiation or action. He liſtened with affected complacency to the reſpective overtures of France and England, without declaring his deſigns, watching for a favourable opportunity to employ the well organiſed army, which he inherited from his father, to his own glory and intereſt.

The time ſeemed favourable to allay the jealouſy which had ſo long ſubſiſted between the houſes of Brunſwick and Brandenburgh. This had long been a favourite meaſure with Walpole, who had in vain endeavoured to reconcile their jarring intereſts. He now ſucceeded in overcoming the pertinacity of the king, and in fixing the wavering reſolutions of the cabinet. At his inſtigation, a plan of a grand confederacy againſt the houſe of Bourbon, of which the king of Pruſſia was to be the ſoul, was formed by Horace Walpole *, approved by the duke of Newcaſtle, and ſubmitted to the king.

Of the Emperor.

While this meaſure was in agitation with a fair proſpect of ſucceſs, the death of the Emperor, Charles the Sixth, and of the Czarina, totally changed the ſyſtem of European politics, and deranged

* Walpole Papers.

ranged the measures of the British cabinet. In virtue of the pragmatic sanction, Maria-Theresa, eldest daughter of the deceased Emperor, instantly succeeded to the whole Austrian inheritance. She was acknowledged by all the powers of Europe, excepting the elector of Bavaria, who had alone refused to guaranty the succession of the female line, and she conceived the most sanguine hopes of being able to raise her husband, Francis, great duke of Tuscany, to the Imperial throne, so long possessed by her ancestors. But the calm and sunshine which ushered in the new reign, were soon overclouded. The king of Prussia revived an antiquated claim to part of Silesia, and asserted his pretensions, by leading an army, in the depth of winter, into that duchy. He was favourably received by the protestants, who formed two thirds of the natives, successively occupied Breslaw, the capital, and several other towns, without the smallest resistance, and defeated, at Molvitz, an Austrian army, composed chiefly of veterans, under the command of marshal Neuperg. The British cabinet, knowing the defenceless state of the Austrian dominions, solicited Maria-Theresa to purchase the friendship of Frederick, by acceding to his demands, and by sacrificing a small part of her territories to secure the remainder. The queen of Hungary, however, peremptorily rejected all proposals of accommodation, and appealed to Great Britain for the succours stipulated by the treaty which guarantied the pragmatic sanction. The successful irruption of Prussia, brought forward

Chapter 54. 1739 to 1741. Accession of Maria Theresa. Invasion of Silesia.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. ward numerous claimants to parts of the Auſtrian ſucceſſion. The electors of Bavaria and Saxony. the kings of Spain and Sardinia, all ſecretly abetted or openly aided by France, evinced a diſpoſition to join Frederick in hoſtilities againſt the houſe of Auſtria.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-FIFTH:

1740—1741.

Meeting of Parliament.—Addreſs.—Views of Oppoſition.—Motion for the Removal of Sir Robert Walpole.—Speech of Sandys.—Conduct of the Tories.—Shippen withdraws.

Meeting of parliament. Nov. 18, 1740. UNDER theſe critical circumſtances, both at home and abroad, the laſt ſeſſion of this parliament aſſembled. The king, in his ſpeech from the throne, ſaid, "I acquainted you, at the cloſe of the laſt ſeſſion of parliament, that I was making preparations for carrying on the juſt and neceſſary war in which I am engaged, in the moſt proper places, and in the moſt vigorous and effectual manner. For this purpoſe ſtrong ſquadrons were got ready, and ordered to ſail upon important ſervices, both in the Weſt Indies and Europe, with as much expedition as the nature of thoſe ſervices and the manning of the ſhips would admit. A very conſiderable body of land forces was embarked, which is to be joined by a great number of my ſubjects raiſed in America; and all things neceſſary for tranſporting the troops from hence, and carrying

ing on the deſigned expedition, were a long time in readineſs, and waited only for an opportunity to purſue the intended voyage. Chap. 55. 1740 to 1741.

" The ſeveral incidents which have happened in the mean time have had no effect upon me, but to confirm me in my reſolutions, and to determine me to add ſtrength to my armaments, rather than divert or deter me from thoſe juſt and vigorous methods which I am purſuing, for maintaining the honour of my crown, and the undoubted rights of my people.

" The court of Spain having already felt ſome effects of our reſentment, began to be ſenſible that they ſhould be no longer able to defend themſelves againſt the efforts of the Britiſh nation. And if any other power, agreeably to ſome late extraordinary proceedings, ſhould interpoſe, and attempt to preſcribe or limit the operations of the war againſt my declared enemies, the honour and intereſt of my crown and kingdoms muſt call upon us to loſe no time in putting ourſelves into ſuch a condition, as may enable us to repel any inſults, and to fruſtrate any deſigns formed againſt us, in violation of the faith of treaties. And I hope any ſuch unprecedented ſteps, under what colour or pretence ſoever they may be taken, will inſpire my allies with a true ſenſe of the common danger, and will unite us in the ſupport and defence of the common cauſe.

" The great and unhappy event of the death of the late Emperor, opens a new ſcene in the affairs of Europe, in which all the principal powers may

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be immediately or conſequentially concerned. It is impoſſible to determine what turn the policy, intereſt, or ambition, of the ſeveral courts, may lead them to take in this critical conjuncture. It ſhall be my care ſtrictly to obſerve and attend to their motions, and to adhere to the engagements I am under, in order to the maintaining of the balance of power, and the liberties of Europe, and in concert with ſuch powers as are under the ſame obligations, or equally concerned to preſerve the public ſafety and tranquillity, and to act ſuch a part, as may beſt contribute to avert the imminent dangers that may threaten them*."

Addreſs of the commons:

He then, in the uſual language, demanded the neceſſary ſupplies, recommended them to prohibit the exportation of corn, which the great ſcarcity rendered neceſſary, and concluded by exhorting them to make proviſion for removing the difficulties which obſtructed the manning of the fleet. In the houſe of commons, when an addreſs was moved, teſtifying the gratitude and affection of the houſe, and their reſolution to ſupport the king in the vigorous proſecution of the war; the oppoſition propoſed to inſert the words, "to make a due examination into the application of the ſupplies given the laſt ſeſſion of parliament." But the inſertion of theſe words, which were intended to intimate a diffidence of adminiſtration, was negatived by 226 againſt 159, and the original addreſs was carried †.

The

* Journals. † Ibid.

The great ſcene of political altercation during this ſeſſion was the houſe of peers, where the duke of Argyle, in particular, made a moſt conſpicuous figure on the ſide of oppoſition. The king was no ſooner withdrawn, and the ſpeech read by the lord chancellor, than the duke of Argyle ſuddenly roſe, before any of the miniſterial peers could make the cuſtomary motion, and propoſed an addreſs, to aſſure the king that the houſe would ſupport him with their lives and fortunes in proſecution of the juſt and neceſſary war in which he was engaged. After ſtating that the ancient mode of drawing up the addreſs was ſhort and general, reprobating the modern cuſtom of echoing back the ſpeech from the throne, paragraph by paragraph, and expreſſing approbation of every meaſure referred to in the ſpeech; he with great animation, and with no leſs acrimony, arraigned the mode of conducting the war, in which he declared that no one right ſtep had been taken either in the commencement or proſecution. He particularly blamed the miſcarriage of the expedition againſt Ferrol, and even inſinuated that ſecret orders had been given by miniſters againſt making any attempt on the coaſt of Spain, and that the ſailing of the grand fleet, which had been delayed, was the effect of the king's preſence. He mentioned the culpable neglect, and more than neglect, in not ſending ſupplies to admiral Vernon. He ſeverely reprobated the ſpeech, which he conſidered as the ſpeech of the miniſter, for not naming the power who might attempt to limit or preſcribe the operations of the

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Of the lords.

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the war. He concluded by propoſing to revive the ancient method of addreſſing, ſimply to "congratulate his majeſty on his ſafe return to his regal dominions: To aſſure his majeſty that they would ſtand by him with their lives and fortunes, in the proſecution of the war; and as a further proof of their duty and affection to his majeſty's ſacred perſon, royal family, and government, to declare that they would exert themſelves in their high capacity of hereditary great council of the crown, (to which all other councils were ſubordinate and accountable) in ſuch manner as might beſt tend to promote the true intereſt of his majeſty and the country in the preſent juncture." Lord Bathurſt ſeconded the motion.

This addreſs was oppoſed by lord Haverſham, who moved another. The previous queſtion being called for by the duke of Newcaſtle, the duke of Argyle's motion was negatived by 66 againſt 38; and an addreſs, according to the ordinary form, propoſed by lord Haverſham, paſſed on the motion without a diviſion; but a violent proteſt was ſigned by two-and-twenty peers *.

Views of oppoſition.

The great aim of oppoſition in this memorable ſeſſion was to increaſe the unpopularity of the miniſter, by preſſing his miſconduct in the proſecution of the war, by imputing all the miſcarriages and ill ſucceſs to him, to harraſs him with repeated motions and queſtions relative to the production of papers and letters, and to the proſecution of the war, which might tend either to criminate

* Lords' Debates, vol. 7. p. 418.

criminate him if granted, or if denied, to throw an odium on his myſteriouſneſs and uncandid reſerve. In the houſe of lords, in particular, various letters and copies of inſtructions were moved for, and refuſed only by ſmall majorities; others were carried which ought to have been denied, owing to the feeble reſiſtance of ſome members of the cabinet.

At this period the oppoſition were diſunited amongſt themſelves, and could not be brought to form a conſiſtent party, moving regularly towards one great object; but thinking themſelves ſecure of ſucceſs, began already to quarrel about the ſpoils. The Tories jealous of the Whigs, complained, that though far inferior in number, they aſſumed a conſequence and ſuperiority to which they were not entitled. They ſuſpected that ſeveral of them had already begun to tamper with the party in the cabinet, which was known to be adverſe to the miniſter. The death of Sir William Wyndham diſſolved the ties which had kept the Tories in union with the Whigs, and enfeebled both parties by a want of mutual confidence. From theſe cauſes the debates in the houſe of commons were not conducted with their uſual energy. But as the peers in oppoſition were more cloſely united, and leſs diſtracted with jealouſies, their efforts were more vigorous and concentrated, and their motions led to the perſonal attack on the miniſter, which diſtinguiſhed this memorable ſeſſion. To prepare the public mind, they entered into long and frequent proteſts, which,

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which, during the interruption given to the publication of debates, conveyed their ſentiments unanſwered to the world.

Notice of motion.

Their motions and publications formed a prelude to the grand attack. On the 11th of February, Sandys, who is juſtly called by Smollett "the motion-maker," left his ſeat, and croſſing the floor to the miniſter, ſaid, that he thought it an act of common attention to inform him, that he ſhould on Friday next, bring an accuſation of ſeveral articles againſt him. Walpole thanked him for the information. Soon afterwards Sandys ſtood in his place, and acquainted the houſe, that he intended on the enſuing Friday to open a matter of great importance, which perſonally concerned the chancellor of the exchequer, and therefore hoped that he would on that day be preſent.

The miniſter immediately roſe, and received the intimation with great compoſure and dignity, thanked him for his notice; and after requeſting a candid and impartial hearing, declared, that he would not fail to attend the houſe, as he was not conſcious of any crime to deſerve accuſation. He laid his hand on his breaſt, and ſaid, with ſome emotion,

"Nil conſcire ſibi, nulli palleſcere culpæ."

Pulteney obſerved, that the right honourable gentleman's logic and Latin were equally inaccurate, and declared that he had miſquoted Horace, who had written *nullâ palleſcere culpâ*. The miniſter

ſter defended his quotation, and Pulteney repeating his aſſertion, he offered a wager of a guinea; Pulteney accepted the challenge, and referred the deciſion of the diſpute to the miniſter's friend Nicholas Hardinge, clerk of the houſe, a man diſtinguiſhed for claſſical erudition. Hardinge decided againſt Walpole, the guinea was immediately thrown to Pulteney, who caught it, and holding it up to the houſe, exclaimed, "It is the only money which I have received from the treaſury for many years, and it ſhall be the laſt *."

The public expectations were raiſed to the utmoſt pitch, the paſſages to the gallery were crowded at a very early hour, the concourſe was prodigious. Several of the commons ſecured their ſeats at ſix in the morning, and no leſs than 450 members attended on this important occaſion. Feb. 13. The debate was opened at one o'clock.

Sandys † began by obſerving, that among the many advantages ariſing from our happy conſtitution, there was one reciprocal to the king and people: The legal and regular method by which the people might lay their grievances, complaints, and opinions, before their ſovereign, not only with regard to the meaſures which he purſues, but alſo with regard to the perſons whom he employs. Speech of Sandys.

"In

* Anecdote communicated by George Hardinge, eſq; ſon of Nicholas Hardinge.—Account by Sir Robert Walpole.—Etough's Papers.—Correſpondence.—Tindal, vol. 20, p. 486.—Chandler, 1740-1, p. 63. This guinea was carefully preſerved by Mr. Pulteney, and is now in the poſſeſſion of Sir William Pulteney, bart.

† The ſubſtance of this ſpeech is taken from an abſtract made by Mr. Fox.—Correſpondence.—From parliamentary Memorandums by Sir Robert Walpole.—Orford Papers.—Chandler.

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"In abſolute monarchies," he ſaid, "the people may ſuffer, but cannot publicly complain; and this want of communication is productive of the moſt dreadful calamities both to the prince and people. For as the monarch has no means of becoming acquainted with the public opinion, he often continues to purſue the ſame meaſures, and to employ the ſame men, until the diſcontents become univerſal; a general inſurrection takes place, and both he and his miniſters are involved in one common ruin. In this kingdom ſuch a misfortune can never happen, as long as parliaments aſſemble regularly and freely. For if diſcontents ariſe, when any of the meaſures purſued by the king's ſervants are injurious, and his miniſters unpopular, it is the duty of this houſe to give proper information and advice; and if we neglect to do ſo, we betray not only our duty to our country and conſtitution, but our duty to our ſovereign. This being my opinion, and the opinion of every perſon who entertains true notions of our conſtitution, I can no longer defer making the motion of which I formerly gave notice.

"There is not a member of this houſe who is not ſenſible that both our foreign and domeſtic affairs, for ſeveral years paſt, have been unſatisfactory to the majority of the nation. The people have ſuffered from paſt meaſures; they complain of preſent meaſures; they expect no redreſs, no alteration or amendment but from the interference of this houſe. Theſe are the ſentiments of the people; which ought to be repreſented to the king,

king, in the proper method eſtabliſhed by the conſtitution. Chapter 55. 1740 to 1742.

"I have long expected, that ſuch a motion as I am now to make would have been brought forward by ſome other gentleman more capable than myſelf to enforce what I ſhall propoſe; but as no one has hitherto attempted it, and as this is the laſt ſeſſion of this parliament, I am unwilling it ſhould expire without anſwering the people's expectations, which, in this reſpect, are ſo juſt, ſo well founded, and ſo agreeable to the conſtitution. I therefore hope I ſhall be excuſed for attempting what I think my duty as a member of this houſe, and as a friend to the preſent happy eſtabliſhment."

He then lamented the miſerable condition of the nation; engaged in a war with one potentate, and likely to be involved in another, without one ally abroad, and under the preſſure of an immenſe debt at home. He ſaid that he would inquire by what means we were reduced to this ſituation, and would then make his intended motion.

In making this inquiry into the cauſes of our unfortunate condition, he ſhould firſt begin by conſidering foreign affairs, then advert to domeſtic affairs, and laſtly enter into the conduct of the war. Heads of accuſation.

In regard to foreign affairs, we had departed from the principles of the grand alliance, which tended to depreſs our inveterate enemy the houſe of Bourbon, and had abandoned and loſt our old and natural ally the houſe of Auſtria. On foreign affairs.

Although

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. Although it had been frequently aſſerted, that all the misfortunes of our foreign negotiations were principally owing to the peace of Utrecht; yet he was of another opinion. The evils of the treaty of Utrecht had been repaired by the quadruple alliance, and ſtill more by the glorious victory which admiral Byng had gained over the Spaniſh fleet, off the coaſt of Sicily; a victory, however, which ſerved no other purpoſe than to give riſe to the ſcandalous treaty of peace in 1721, a treaty highly diſhonourable to the nation, becauſe it agreed to reſtore the ſhips we had taken in an open and juſt war, and began with a negotiation, if not an engagement, to give up Gibraltar and Minorca, without ſtipulating any conditions for the advantage of this country, or obtaining an explanation of thoſe treaties, which even then began to be miſrepreſented on the part of Spain. In one word, this treaty re-eſtabliſhed the preponderance of the houſe of Bourbon.

He could declare, from the higheſt authority, that we had even ſince that time been, with reſpect to foreign powers, in a moſt deſirable ſituation. The high authority to which he alluded was the ſpeech from the throne, in November 1724, which repreſented "peace with all powers abroad; at home perfect tranquillity, plenty, and an uninterrupted enjoyment of all civil and religious rights;" expreſſions which charmed every Engliſh ear. But that univerſal happineſs did not long continue. For ſoon after this period we entered into "that cloſe friendſhip and correſpondence

reſpondence with the court of France, which, to the infinite diſadvantage of this nation, has continued ever ſince, and which has now, at laſt, brought the balance of power into the utmoſt danger, if not to inevitable ruin." We declined availing ourſelves of the fortunate breach which had taken place between the two branches of the houſe of Bourbon, we declined taking advantage of the reſentment entertained by Philip againſt France, for the return of the Spaniſh infanta, we declined the offer of the king of Spain to ſubmit to the ſole mediation of England to ſettle the diſputes between him and the Emperor.

"But the moſt pernicious of all the pernicious meaſures was the treaty of Hanover. When the alliance between Spain and the Emperor was concluded, we, who by a very little dexterity, might then have duped France, who has duped us ſo often, inſtead of doing ſo, by the treaty of Hanover, flung ourſelves into her arms, and England's affairs ſeem, ever ſince, to have been managed by a French intereſt. Fleets had been ſent, one to the Baltic, another to the Weſt Indies, to inſult, and only to inſult, the Czar and the king of Spain. The three pretended articles of the Vienna treaty, which produced that of Hanover, were the eſtabliſhment of the Oſtend company, the taking of Gibraltar, and the placing of the Pretender on the throne. But when Gibraltar was beſieged, what aſſiſtance did we receive from France?" He was inclined to believe, that no help was ſo much as demanded of the French, becauſe we knew none

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would be granted: The reparation of Dunkirk was a memorable inſtance of French ſincerity.

He then adverted to the preliminaries of the peace of 1727, and the act of the Pardo. He ſtated, that on the firſt complaints from the merchants, of Spaniſh depredations, the parliament thought fit to recommend pacific meaſures only. He cenſured the treaty of Seville, by which Spaniſh troops were to be introduced into Italy. Don Carlos went thither, but we gained nothing; commiſſioners only were appointed, and when the parliament, in 1732, addreſſed to know what progreſs they had made, his majeſty's anſwer was, that they were to meet in four months; but by the delays of Spain, the conferences were not opened till 1734, a ſtrong proof of Spaniſh perfidy; yet we had introduced the Spaniſh troops, according to our treaty with the Emperor and States General in 1731. We then guarantied the pragmatic ſanction, and engaged to ſupport the Emperor in all his dominions, but ſaw him loſe Sicily and Naples, ſuffered France to gain Loraine, and the power of the houſe of Auſtria, which had been ridiculouſly magnified in order to vindicate the Hanoverian treaty, pulled down and brought to its preſent low and miſerable ſituation.

"That great man, admiral Vernon, ſaw this error, and gave frequent admonitions againſt the perfidy of France, in this very houſe, for which reaſon it was contrived, that he ſhould be excluded from the next parliament, and he was likewiſe denied his rank. Then came the ſecond com-

plaint of depredations, when, by the management of one perſon, parliament was prevailed upon to be again pacific."

He then expatiated on the convention: He repeated moſt of the objections made to that treaty, which he called one of thoſe expedients on which the miniſter ſeemed to live from year to year, and when this treaty was ſhamefully broken by Spain, war was not declared, but an order iſſued at firſt for repriſals only. Negotiations, as he believed, ſtill went on, but ſoon after followed the preſent war.

On domeſtic affairs.

He next adverted to domeſtic affairs; after ſtating the national debt in 1716, he alledged that the debts of the army had been ſwelled from £400,000 to above two millions, and debentures iſſued for that ſum, of which part had been diſcharged from the produce of the ſinking fund, by which one perſon had gained conſiderable advantage.

To make and unmake, he urged, the famous bank contract, to ſecure from condign puniſhment thoſe, who by their wicked and avaricious execution of the truſt repoſed in them by the South Sea ſcheme, had ruined many thouſands; to commute public juſtice, and ſubject the leſs guilty to a puniſhment too ſevere, in order that the moſt heinous offenders might eſcape that which they deſerved; and to give up to the South Sea company the ſum of ſeven millions ſterling, which they had obliged themſelves to pay to the public, a great part of which ſum was given to old ſtock holders, and conſequently to thoſe who had never ſuffered by the

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. ſcheme; were the ſteps by which diſhoneſt power was obtained. All the evils and none of the advantages of the French Miſſiſſipi ſcheme were adopted: Our South Sea ſcheme had *done us harm*, while their's had liquidated their debts.

He ſtated the debts and the produce of the ſinking fund in 1727, and aſſerted, that the national debt was not diminiſhed, although the ſinking fund had ſince that period produced no leſs than fifteen millions, all which had been ſpent in Spithead expeditions, and Hyde Park reviews.

He enumerated many inſtances of unconſtitutional conduct. A larger ſtanding army maintained than was neceſſary or conſiſtent with the conſtitution; augmented without cauſe. Squadrons fitted out at an enormous expence, to the great annoyance of trade, without being employed againſt enemies, or for the aſſiſtance of allies. All methods to ſecure the conſtitution againſt that moſt dangerous enemy, corruption, rejected or rendered ineffectual; many penal laws paſſed of an arbitrary tendency; public expenditure increaſed by the addition of new and uſeleſs offices; all inquiries into the management of public money perverted or defeated; votes of credit frequent; expences of the civil liſt increaſed; the abolition of burthenſome and pernicious taxes, and the diſcharge of the debt prevented, from a principle that the collection of taxes rendered a great number of placemen and officers neceſſary, whoſe votes gave weight to undue influence in elections and in parliament; the reduction of intereſt oppoſed, not by the

the influence of argument, but by another ſort of influence; officers diſmiſſed for voting againſt the exciſe ſcheme, one of the weakeſt or moſt violent projects ever ſet on foot or countenanced by any miniſter. Theſe, he obſerved, were the characteriſtic features of a corrupt and profligate adminiſtration.

On the conduct of the war.

He then entered on the conduct of the war. Vernon, who after having been excluded from his ſeat in parliament, and deprived of his rank, for oppoſing adminiſtration, had retired to the country, was the only perſon fit or willing to conduct the expedition to America; and yet even with theſe claims, he was not reſtored to his rank; though it was to be hoped that his meritorious ſervices would extort that mark of confidence. Vernon received on his departure the faireſt promiſes of being ſupported and ſupplied. How were theſe promiſes fulfilled? He ſailed from Plymouth on the 3d of Auguſt 1739, only with letters of repriſal, war not being declared till October, by which means his exertions were fettered and reſtrained. He ſailed with a fleet badly equipped, and badly ſupplied. In September, ſome bomb veſſels were ſent to him, which did not arrive at Jamaica till the 15th of January. No proviſions or ſtores were forwarded, and ſo ſcantily was he victualled, that on the 18th of March, he wrote to government, earneſtly preſſing for more ſupplies. He ſaid, that his letters on the table ſufficiently proved theſe facts; they diſplayed his opinion of the great things which he might have effected, had

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the number of land forces, which he earneſtly and repeatedly called for, been granted, forces which remained at home for no other uſe but to oppreſs the people; forces which ſhould not have been raiſed, or ſhould have been ſent out to vindicate the honour of their country againſt their oppreſſors in America, where alone offenſive meaſures could be carried on with effect. Admiral Haddock, he urged, was equally neglected; bitter complaints of want of ſupplies came no leſs from his ſquadron, and he was forced to act upon the defenſive. To that want, he ſolely attributed the eſcape of the Cadiz and Ferrol ſquadrons. He commended, in high terms, the care and diligence of admiral Haddock, in furniſhing convoys, and protecting the trade of the Mediterranean, and animadverted with equal acrimony on the culpable neglect of convoys at home, and the numerous cruiſers of the enemy, which infeſted the Channel, and ruined our commerce.

Things being thus, he ſhould now name the author of all theſe public calamities. After what he had ſaid, he believed no one could miſtake the perſon to whom he alluded: every one muſt be convinced that he meant the right honourable gentleman who ſat oppoſite to him, and the whole houſe might ſee that the right honourable gentleman took it to himſelf; that againſt him there was as general a diſcontent as had ever ariſen againſt any miniſter. Although this diſcontent had laſted ſo long, yet the right honourable gentleman ſtill continued in his poſt, in oppoſition to the ſenſe of the

the country; this was no ſign of the freedom of government, becauſe a free people neither will nor can be governed by a miniſter whom they hate or deſpiſe. Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

He had well conſidered the difficulty of perſonal attacks, yet he ſhould obey the voice of the people, and act like an honeſt man, and like an Engliſhman, in making his motion. He himſelf, merely a private man, protected only by his innocence, would fearleſsly enter the liſts againſt one who uſurped a regal power, who had arrogated to himſelf a place of French extraction, that of ſole miniſter; contrary to the nature and principles of the Engliſh conſtitution. He was well aware, that a common excuſe would be urged in his defence, that parliament had given a ſanction to many of the acts which he had enumerated. But the right honourable gentleman could not urge this exculpation, without ſubjecting himſelf to the charge of groſs inconſiſtency. He himſelf had accuſed the earl of Oxford of departing from the principles of the grand alliance, and of having ſacrificed the country to France, although all his meaſures had been ſanctioned by parliament. He obſerved likewiſe, that parliaments were not infallible, but reſembled other courts of juſtice. They judge from information, and if convinced that they had been miſled by falſe information, ſhould equally acknowledge their error, and alter their opinions.

"If it ſhould be aſked," he ſaid, "Why I impute all theſe evils to *one perſon*, I reply, be-

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. cauſe that one perſon grafped in his own hands every branch of government; that *one perſon* has attained the ſole direction of affairs, monopoliſed all the favours of the crown, compaſſed the diſpoſal of all places, penſions, titles, ribbands, as well as all preferments, civil, military, and eccleſiaſtical; that *one perſon* made a blind ſubmiſſion to his will, both in elections and parliament, the only terms of preſent favour, and future expectation, and continuance in office; and declared, in this very houſe, that he muſt be a pitiful miniſter who did not diſplace an officer that oppoſed his meaſures in parliament.

"But even let us ſuppoſe no overſight, error, or crime in his public conduct, and that the people were ſatisfied with his adminiſtration, the very length of it is in itſelf a ſufficient cauſe for removing him. In a free government too long poſſeſſion of power is highly dangerons. Moſt commonwealths have been overturned by this very overſight; and in this country, we know how difficult it has often proved for parliament to draw an old favourite from behind the throne, even when he has been guilty of the moſt heinous crimes. I wiſh this may not be our caſe at preſent; for though I will not ſay, nor have I at preſent any occaſion for ſhewing, that the favourite I am now complaining of has been guilty of any crimes, the proof may then be come at, and the witneſſes againſt him will not be afraid to appear. Till you do this, it is impoſſible to determine, whether he is guilty or innocent; and conſidering the univer-

ſal

ſal clamour againſt him, it is high time to reduce him to ſuch a condition, that he may be brought to a fair, an impartial, and a ſtrict account. As I am only to propoſe an addreſs to remove him from the king's counſels, I have no occaſion to accuſe him of any ſpecific crime. The diſſatisfaction of the people, and their ſuſpicion of his conduct, are a ſufficient foundation for ſuch an addreſs, and a ſufficient cauſe for his removal. For no ſovereign of theſe kingdoms ought to employ any miniſter who is diſagreeable to the people, and when any miniſter is become unpopular, it is our duty to inform the king, that he may give general ſatisfaction by his removal. I ſolemnly declare, that I have no reſentment againſt the right honourable gentleman; I have, on the contrary, received perſonal civilities from him, and have no private motives to wiſh him ill. But as I think it neceſſary, for the welfare of my country, that he ſhould no longer continue in his majeſty's counſels, who has bewildered himſelf in treaties, who has forfeited his word with every court in Europe, and againſt whom the voice of the world, is in uniſon with that of his country, I therefore move, That an humble addreſs be preſented to his majeſty, that he would be graciouſly pleaſed to remove the right honourable Sir Robert Walpole, knight of the moſt noble order of the garter, firſt commiſſioner, chancellor, and under treaſurer of the exchequer, and one of his majeſty's moſt honourable privy council, from his majeſty's preſence and counſels for ever."

Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

Motion.

The

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

The motion was ſeconded by lord Limerick, who obſerved, that the nation was reduced to ſo low a ſtate by the miſconduct of the miniſter, that no reſource was left, except the increaſe of the land tax, and the anticipation of the funds. That the reins of government were conducted by a ſole miniſter, who lived by expedients, who had removed the beſt and ableſt men in the army, for no other demerit than for their parliamentary oppoſition to his meaſures.

Seconded by lord Limerick.

Motion for Walpole to withdraw.

Wortley Montague then propoſed, in conformity to the order of the houſe, which requires that every member, againſt whom an accuſation is brought, ſhould retire while his conduct is examined, that Sir Robert Walpole ſhould be ordered to withdraw. He was ſeconded by Gybbon, who attempted to vindicate this unjuſt propoſal, by ſeveral inapplicable precedents.

Oppoſed.

The motion was warmly oppoſed by Bromley and Howe; and as the houſe appeared to favour that ſide of the queſtion, Gybbon, after urging, that if the motion for the removal ſhould be carried, neither the life, liberty, or eſtate of the miniſter would be affected by the deciſion, propoſed that he ſhould be firſt heard in his own defence, and then withdraw. This propoſal was ſtrenuouſly ſupported, and no leſs ſtrenuouſly reſiſted; it was called an unprecedented mode of proceeding, to charge a member in general terms, by ſpeeches only, without ſtating particular facts as crimes, or bringing any evidence to prove them, or him to be the author of them; and then to expect that he

he ſhould retire, and other members be permitted to load him with general accuſations, while he was not preſent to hear and make his defence. The houſe appearing convinced of the abſurdity and injuſtice of this propoſal, it was withdrawn, and reſolved that the miniſter ſhould hear all the charges brought againſt him, and ſhould be the laſt to reply. Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

A long and violent debate then took place on the main queſtion. The principal ſpeakers in favour of the motion were Pulteney, Bootle, Fazakerly, Pitt, and Lyttleton. Debate on the queſtion.

The ſubſtance of their arguments was ſimilar to thoſe which had been advanced by Sandys; no direct accuſation was made, no ſpecific charge urged, no particular crime alledged, but a ſpecies of accumulative guilt, drawn from a long ſeries of ſuppoſed miſconduct, and founded on, what they called, moral certainty, preſumptive evidence, probable proof, common fame, and notoriety of facts.

They juſtified their proceedings by making a diſtinction between impeachments, or bills of pains and penalties, which affect the lives, liberty, or eſtates of the perſons accuſed, and an addreſs to remove a miniſter only, without attempting to inflict any legiſlative or judicial puniſhment. In the firſt caſe, they obſerved, legal evidence is neceſſary, and muſt be applied to the ſeveral heads of the accuſation, but in the other ſtrong preſumptions, founded upon public fame and notoriety, have been always held ſufficient.

Pitt

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. Pitt.

Pitt obſerved, in his emphatic language, "That during the adminiſtration that was the object of cenſure, at home debts were increaſed and taxes multiplied, and the ſinking fund alienated; abroad the ſyſtem of Europe was totally ſubverted, and at this awful moment, when the greateſt ſcene was opening to Europe that had ever before occurred, he who had loſt the confidence of all mankind, ſhould not be permitted to continue at the head of the king's government*.

Pulteney.

Pulteney enforced the general tenour of the argument advanced by Sandys, with increaſed animation, wit, and eloquence. He particularly dwelt on his favourite topic, that the ſyſtem adopted and invariably purſued by the miniſter, tended to exalt the houſe of Bourbon, and depreſs that of Auſtria; and maintained his poſition by an analyſis of foreign tranſactions and treaties, that preceded and followed the treaty of Hanover, which he conſidered as the ſource of all ſubſequent degradations, and the cauſe of national diſgrace.

References were not only made to thoſe miniſters who had been impeached or cenſured by the houſe of commons, to Suffolk, Clarendon, and Luderdale, but Walpole was compared to the moſt worthleſs favourites that had ever engroſſed the ear of former ſovereigns. Alluſions were even made to the minions of Edward the Second, Pierce Gaveſton †, and

* Heads of Pitt's ſpeech, in Sir Robert Walpole's Parliamentary Memorandums.

† About this time was publiſhed, "The Life and Death of Pierce Gaveſton, Earl of Cornwal, grand Favourite and Prime Miniſter to that unfortunate Prince, Edward the Second, King of England, with Political

and Hugh Le Deſpenſer, and he was accuſed of reſembling them in the giddineſs of their power, and the exorbitance of their grants. Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

The motion was oppoſed, with great animation and ability, by the friends of the miniſter. Pelham and Stephen Fox principally diſtinguiſhed themſelves in this debate; after vindicating the meaſures, both foreign and domeſtic, which had been ſo much arraigned, they reſted the chief part of the defence on the impropriety of the motion. They expoſed the violence and injuſtice of propoſing to have a member of the houſe, and a perſon in his high ſtation, puniſhed by the loſs of character and reputation, upon general allegations, which were not proved to be crimes, and which had received, in former examinations and debates, the approbation or conſent of the parliament, and in making Sir Robert Walpole an adviſer of the things alledged, as prime or ſole miniſter, without any other evidence than that of common fame*. Pelham and Fox.

The aſſertion of Sir Charles Wager made a great impreſſion on the houſe. With a view to combat the arguments that Walpole was ſole miniſter, the veteran ſeaman, who had been at the head of the admiralty Sir Charles Wager.

tical Remarks, by Way of Caution to all crowned Heads, and Evil Miniſters." It was accompanied with a caricature print, repreſenting the figure of Sir Robert Walpole, holding in his hands a label, inſcribed *Corruption*. Before him is the block, and the executioner with the axe. Behind him is a grenadier with a bag of money in his hand, on which is written *pay*; a hand in the clouds holds a ſword over his head. Underneath is a vignette, with a baboon in chains on one ſide, and on the other a hydra pierced with darts, incloſing this inſcription;

"Tho' evil miniſters awhile,
"May baſk themſelves in fortune's ſmile;
"They for their crimes muſt ſoon or late,
"Like Gaveſton, ſubmit to fate."

* Account of the debate by Sir Robert Walpole. Correſpondence.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. admiralty nine years, ſaid, "That, to his knowledge, Sir Robert Walpole was as forward and zealous to promote the war as any of his majeſty's council, and that nothing was a moment wanted in his province, that of iſſuing money: That he had never interfered in recommending any one perſon to the admiralty board; and that if he had ever done ſo, he (Sir Charles) would have thrown up all his employments."

Conduct of the Tories. The miniſter was not only defended by his friends and thoſe who uſually ſupported the meaſures of government, but the motion was oppoſed by ſeveral Tories, as tending to introduce an inquiſitorial ſyſtem.

Lord Cornbury. Lord Cornbury, in particular, obſerved, "The advocates for the motion, endeavour to advance a charge of *accumulative* guilt, to aggravate one crime by the ſuperaddition of another, and rather to intend a popular cenſure than a legal condemnation.

"I ſuppoſe no man will ſuſpect that an unjuſt partiality in favour of the gentleman, whoſe conduct is now the ſubject of examination, influences me to cenſure this mode of proceeding, ſince no man can want reaſons againſt it of the greateſt weight. Reaſons which deſerve the cloſeſt attention from every man of prudence and virtue, every man who regards his own ſafety, or the happineſs of future generations. No man, whoſe judgment is not overborne by his reſentment, and whoſe ardour for vengeance has not extinguiſhed every other motive of action, can reſolve to give the ſanction

of

of his voice to a method of profecution, by which the good and bad are equally endangered; and which will make the adminiſtration of public affairs deſtructive to the pureſt integrity, and the higheſt wiſdom. Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

"That ſuch muſt be the conſequence of charges like this, will appear no longer a paradoxical aſſertion, if it be remembered, that humanity is a ſtate of imperfection, that the ſtricteſt virtue ſometimes declines from the right, and that the moſt conſummate policy is by falſe appearances, or accidental inattention, betrayed into error. For how ſoon muſt that man be deſtroyed, whoſe high ſtation expoſes him to the continual obſervation of envy and malevolence, whoſe minuteſt errors are carefully remarked, and whoſe caſual failings are treaſured up as a fund of accuſations. How ſoon, if trivial tranſgreſſions ſhall be accumulated into capital crimes, may the beſt man complete the ſum of his offences, and be doomed to ignominy, to exile, or to death!

"In criminal proceedings, particular regard has been had to precedents, and ſurely the effects of a former accuſation of this kind, give us no encouragement to the repetition of it. From a charge of accumulative treaſon, the faction of the laſt age proceeded to the uſurpation of boundleſs authority, the ſubverſion of our conſtitution, and the murder of the king.

"I ſhall therefore continue to ſuppoſe every man innocent till he appears from legal evidence to be guilty; and to reject any charge of accumulative

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lative guilt, upon the ſame principles of regard to liberty, to virtue, to truth, and to our conſtitution, by which I have hitherto regulated my conduct; and for the ſame reaſons for which I have condemned the meaſures of the adminiſtration, I ſhall now oppoſe the preſent motion *."

Harley.

Edward Harley, member for Herefordſhire, nephew to the lord treaſurer, and in a ſhort time afterwards earl of Oxford himſelf, evinced, on this occaſion, a ſpirit of moderation, not uſual with perſons engaged in party diſputes. He was one of the heads of the Tory intereſt, and his family had always diſtinguiſhed itſelf in oppoſition to Sir Robert Walpole. He ſaid, "Sir, I do not ſtand up at this time of night, either to accuſe or flatter any man. Since I have had the honour to ſit in parliament, I have oppoſed the meaſures of adminiſtration becauſe I thought them wrong; and as long as they are, I ſhall continue to give as conſtant an oppoſition to them. The ſtate of the nation, by the conduct of our miniſters, is deplorable; a war is deſtroying us abroad, and poverty and corruption are devouring us at home. But whatever I may think of men, God forbid, that my private opinion ſhould be the only rule of my judgment! I ſhould deſire to have an exterior conviction from facts and evidences, and without this, I am ſo far from condemning, that I would not cenſure any man. I am fully ſatisfied in my own mind, that there are thoſe who give pernicious and deſtructive counſels; and, I hope, a time

* Chandler.

time will come, when a proper, legal, parliamentary inquiry may be made, and when clear facts and full evidence will plainly discover who are the enemies of their country. A noble lord, to whom I had the honour to be related, has been often mentioned in this debate: He was impeached and imprisoned; by that imprisonment his years were shortened; and the prosecution was carried on by the honourable person, who is now the subject of your question, though he knew at that very time, that there was no evidence to support it. I am now, Sir, glad of this opportunity to return good for evil, and to do that honourable gentleman and his family, that justice which he denied to mine *."

Chapter 55. 1740 to 1741.

Shippen declared, † "that he looked on this motion as only a scheme for turning out one minister, and bringing in another; that as his conduct in parliament had always been regulated with a view to the good of his country, without any regard to his own private interest, it was quite indifferent to him, who was in or who was out; and he would give himself no concern in the question." At the conclusion of these words he withdrew, and was followed by thirty-four of his friends.

Shippen withdraws.

* Chandler.—Tindal has recorded this speech, as spoken in the house of lords by the earl of Oxford, which was certainly spoken by his uncle in the house of commons. By the death of his cousin, in the following June, he succeeded to the title.

† Chandler.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-SIXTH:

1741.

Reply of Sir Robert Walpole.—Motion negatived.—Similar Motion in the Lords.—Conduct and Anecdotes of Shippen.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

THIS attack, concerted with ſo much previous care, and announced with ſo much oſtentation, was not calculated to alarm the miniſter. He ſaw the diſaffected Whigs feeble and heſitating; all the Tories, not excepting thoſe who voted againſt him, averſe to the queſtion; many ſupporting him with a favourable diſplay of impartial and benevolent principles; the Jacobites ſcornfully turning their backs upon a party apparently united by no principle, and a motion brought forwards without due conſideration. He availed himſelf, with great ability, of the vantage ground on which he ſtood, and commenced the reply by a well conducted attack againſt the diſcordant parts of oppoſition. He fomented the diviſion between the Tories and Whigs in oppoſition, paid a delicate compliment to the Tories, and directed the ſhafts of his eloquence principally againſt the leaders of the diſaffected Whigs, whoſe motives of hoſtility were already ſuſpected by the public.

Speech of Sir Robert Walpole.

He ſaid, "Sir*, it has been obſerved by ſeveral gentlemen, in vindication of this motion, that if it ſhould be carried, neither my life, liberty, or eſtate

* The ſubſtance of thisf peech is taken from parliamentary minutes, in the hand writing of Sir Robert Walpole.—Orford Papers.—Chandler. Tindal.

tate will be affected. But do the honourable gentlemen conſider my character and reputation as of no moment? Is it no imputation to be arraigned before this houſe, in which I have ſat forty years, and to have my name tranſmitted to poſterity with diſgrace and infamy? I will not conceal my ſentiments, that to be named in parliament as a ſubject of inquiry, is to me a matter of great concern; but I have the ſatisfaction at the ſame time to reflect, that the impreſſion to be made depends upon the conſiſtency of the charge, and the motives of the proſecutors. Had the charge been reduced to ſpecific allegations, I ſhould have felt myſelf called upon for a ſpecific defence. Had I ſerved a weak or wicked maſter, and implicitly obeyed his dictates, obedience to his commands muſt have been my only juſtification. But as it has been my good fortune to ſerve a maſter, who wants no bad miniſters, and would have hearkened to none, my defence muſt reſt on my own conduct. The conſciouſneſs of innocence is alſo ſufficient ſupport againſt my preſent proſecutors. A farther juſtification is alſo derived from a conſideration of the views and abilities of the proſecutors. Had I been guilty of great enormities, they want neither zeal and inclination to bring them forwards, nor ability to place them in the moſt prominent point of view. But as I am conſcious of no crime, my own experience convinces me, that none can be juſtly imputed. I muſt therefore aſk the gentlemen, from whence does this attack proceed? From the paſſions and prejudices of the parties combined

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againſt me; who may be divided into three claſſes, the Boys, the riper Patriots, and the Tories. The Tories I can eaſily forgive, they have unwillingly come into the meaſure, and they do me honour in thinking it neceſſary to remove me, as their only obſtacle. What is the inference to be drawn from theſe premiſes? that demerit with them ought to be conſidered as merit with others. But my great and principal crime is my long continuance in office, or, in other words, the long excluſion of thoſe who now complain againſt me. This is the heinous offence which exceeds all others: I keep from them the poſſeſſion of that power, thoſe honours and thoſe emoluments, to which they ſo ardently and pertinaciouſly aſpire. I will not attempt to deny the reaſonableneſs and neceſſity of a party war; but in carrying on that war, all principles and rules of juſtice ſhould not be departed from. The Tories muſt confeſs, that the moſt obnoxious perſons have felt few inſtances of extra judicial power. Wherever they have been arraigned, a plain charge has been exhibited againſt them; they have had an impartial trial, and have been permitted to make their defence; and will they, who have experienced this fair and equitable mode of proceeding, act in direct oppoſition to every principle of juſtice, and eſtabliſh this fatal precedent of parliamentary inquiſition? and whom would they conciliate by a conduct ſo contrary to principle and precedent?

"Can it be fitting in them, who have divided the public opinion of the nation, to ſhare it with thoſe

thoſe who now appear as their competitors? With the men of yeſterday, the boys in politics, who would be abſolutely contemptible did not their audacity render them deteſtable? With the mock patriots, whoſe practice and profeſſions prove their ſelfiſhneſs and malignity, who threatened to purſue me to deſtruction, and who have never for a moment loſt ſight of their object? Theſe men, under the name of the Separatiſts, preſume to call themſelves, excluſively, the *nation* and the *people*, and under that character, aſſume all power. In their eſtimation, the king, lords, and commons are a faction, and *they* are the government. Upon theſe principles, they threaten the deſtruction of all authority, and think they have a right to judge, direct, and reſiſt, all legal magiſtrates. They withdraw from parliament becauſe they ſucceed in nothing, and then attribute their want of ſucceſs not to its true cauſe, their own want of integrity and importance, but to the effect of places, penſions, and corruption. May it not be aſked, Are the people on the court ſide more united than on the other? Are not the Tories, Jacobites, and *Patriots* equally determined? What makes this ſtrict union? What cements this heterogeneous maſs? Party engagements and perſonal attachments. However different their views and principles, they all agree in oppoſition. The Jacobites diſtreſs the government they would ſubvert; the Tories contend for party prevalence and power. The Patriots, from diſcontent and diſappointment, would change the miniſtry, that themſelves might excluſively ſucceed.

Chapter 56. 1741.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. They have laboured this point twenty years unſucceſsfully; they are impatient of longer delay. They clamour for change of meaſures, but mean only change of miniſters.

" In party conteſts, why ſhould not both ſides be equally ſteady? Does not a Whig adminiſtration as well deſerve the ſupport of the Whigs as the contrary? Why is not principle the cement in one as well as the other, eſpecially when they confeſs, that all is levelled againſt one man? Why this one man? becauſe they think, vainly, nobody elſe could withſtand them. All others are treated as tools and vaſſals. The one is the corrupter, the numbers corrupted. But whence this cry of corruption, and excluſive claim of honourable diſtinction? Compare the eſtates, characters, and fortunes of the commons on one ſide, with thoſe on the other. Let the matter be fairly inveſtigated; ſurvey and examine the individuals who uſually ſupport the meaſures of government, and thoſe who are in oppoſition. Let us ſee to whoſe ſide the balance preponderates. Look round both houſes, and ſee to which ſide the balance of virtue and talents preponderates! Are all theſe on one ſide, and not on the other? Or are all theſe to be counterbalanced by an affected claim to the excluſive title of patriotiſm. Gentlemen have talked a great deal of patriotiſm. A venerable word, when duly practiſed. But I am ſorry to ſay, that of late it has been ſo much hackneyed about, that it is in danger of falling into diſgrace: the very idea of true patriotiſm is loſt, and the term has been proſtituted

to

to the very worſt of purpoſes. A patriot, Sir! why patriots ſpring up like muſhrooms? I could raiſe fifty of them within the four-and-twenty hours. I have raiſed many of them in one night. It is but refuſing to gratify an unreaſonable or an inſolent demand, and up ſtarts a patriot. I have never been afraid of making patriots; but I diſdain and deſpiſe all their efforts. But this pretended virtue proceeds from perſonal malice, and from diſappointed ambition. There is not a man amongſt them whoſe particular aim I am not able to aſcertain, and from what motive they have entered into the liſts of oppoſition. Chapter 56. 1741.

"I ſhall now conſider the articles of accuſation which they have brought againſt me, and which they have not thought fit to reduce to ſpecific charges; and I ſhall conſider theſe in the ſame order as that in which they were placed by the honourable member who made the motion. Firſt, in regard to foreign affairs; ſecondly, to domeſtic affairs; and, thirdly, to the conduct of the war.

"As to foreign affairs, I muſt take notice of the uncandid manner in which the gentlemen on the other ſide have managed the queſtion, by blending numerous treaties and complicated negotiations into one general maſs. On foreign affairs.

"To form a fair and candid judgment of the ſubject, it becomes neceſſary not to conſider the treaties merely inſulated; but to advert to the time in which they were made, to the circumſtances and ſituation of Europe when they were made, to the peculiar ſituation in which I ſtand,

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. and to the power which I poſſeſſed. I am called repeatedly and inſidiouſly prime and ſole miniſter. Admitting, however, for the ſake of argument, that I am prime and ſole miniſter in this country; am I, therefore, prime and ſole miniſter of all Europe? Am I anſwerable for the conduct of other countries as well as for that of my own? Many words are not wanting to ſhew, that the particular views of each court occaſioned the dangers which affected the public tranquillity; yet the whole is charged to my account. Nor is this ſufficient; whatever was the conduct of England, I am equally arraigned. If we maintained ourſelves in peace, and took no ſhare in foreign tranſactions, we are reproached for tameneſs and puſillanimity. If, on the contrary, we interfered in the diſputes, we are called Don Quixotes, and dupes to all the world. If we contracted guaranties, it was aſked, why is the nation wantonly burthened? If guaranties were declined, we were reproached with having no allies."

After making theſe preliminary obſervations, on the neceſſity of conſidering the relative ſituation of Europe, when theſe engagements were contracted, and proving that the treaties were right at the time they were made, though they might not have had the deſired effect, he entered into a luminous recapitulation of the principal compacts, which had been adverted to in the courſe of the debate. They formed a connective ſeries, embracing paſt events, preſent advantages, and future contingencies, of which the various parts had ſuch a neceſſary dependance

dependance on each other, that any ſeparation must be fatal to the comprehenſion of the whole. Chapter 56. 1741.

He took up the ſubject from the peace of Utrecht, which, by ſuffering a prince of the houſe of Bourbon to remain on the throne of Spain, had materially altered the balance of power in Europe, had produced new intereſts, and involved this country in a ſeries of delicate and complicated negotiations. The quadruple alliance was the conſequence of that treaty; but as he was not then in adminiſtration, he was not accountable either for its articles or effects, though he was unfortunately miniſter, and unwillingly acceſſory to the execution of it.

He ſhould, therefore, begin with the firſt act of that adminiſtration to which he had the honour to belong; a refuſal to accept of the ſole mediation offered by Spain, on the breach between Spain and France, occaſioned by the diſmiſſion of the infanta. "I hope it will not be ſaid," he obſerved, "we had any reaſon to quarrel with France upon that account; and therefore, if our accepting of that mediation might have produced a rupture with France, it was not our duty to interfere, unleſs we had ſomething very beneficial to expect from the acceptance. A reconciliation between the courts of Vienna and Madrid, it is true, was deſirable to all Europe, as well as to us, provided it had been brought about without any deſign to diſturb our tranquillity, or the tranquillity of Europe; but both parties were then ſo high in their demands, that we could hope for no ſucceſs; and

if

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. if the negotiation had ended without effect, we might have expected the common fate of arbitrators, the diſobliging of both. Therefore, as it was our intereſt to keep well with both, I muſt ſtill think it was the moſt prudent part we could act, to refuſe the offered mediation.

" The next ſtep of our foreign conduct, expoſed to reprehenſion, is the treaty of Hanover. Sir, if I were to give the true hiſtory of that treaty, which no gentleman can deſire, I ſhould, I am ſure I could fully juſtify my own conduct; but as I do not deſire to juſtify my own, without juſtifying his late majeſty's conduct, I muſt obſerve, that his late majeſty had ſuch information, as convinced not only him, but thoſe of his council, both at home and abroad, that ſome dangerous deſigns had been formed between the Emperor and Spain, at the time of their concluding the treaty at Vienna, in May 1725. Deſigns, Sir, which were dangerous not only to the liberties of this nation, but to the liberties of Europe. They were not only to wreſt Gibraltar and Port Mahon from this nation, and force the Pretender upon us, but they were to have Don Carlos married to the Emperor's eldeſt daughter, who would thereby have had a probability of uniting in his perſon, or in the perſon of ſome of his ſucceſſors, the crowns of France and Spain, with the Imperial dignity, and the Auſtrian dominions. It was therefore highly reaſonable, both in France and us, to take the alarm at ſuch deſigns, and to think betimes of preventing their being carried into execution. But with regard to us, it was more particularly our buſineſs to take

the alarm, becauſe we were to have been immediately attacked. I ſhall grant, Sir, it would have been very difficult, if not impoſſible, for Spain and the Emperor joined together to have invaded, or made themſelves maſters of any of the Britiſh dominions; but will it be ſaid, they might not have invaded the king's dominions in Germany, in order to force him to a compliance with what they deſired of him, as king of Great Britain? And if thoſe dominions had been invaded on account of a quarrel with this nation, ſhould we not have been obliged, both in honour and intereſt, to defend them? When we were thus threatened, it was therefore abſolutely neceſſary for us to make an alliance with France; and that we might not truſt too much to their aſſiſtance, it was likewiſe neceſſary to form alliances with the northern powers, and with ſome of the princes in Germany, which we never did, nor ever could do, without granting them immediate ſubſidies. Theſe meaſures were therefore, I ſtill think, not only prudent but neceſſary, and by theſe meaſures we made it much more dangerous for the Emperor and Spain to attack us, than it would otherwiſe have been. Chapter 56. 1741.

"But ſtill, Sir, though by theſe alliances we put ourſelves upon an equal footing with our enemies, in caſe of an attack, yet, in order to preſerve the tranquillity of Europe, as well as our own, there was ſomething elſe to be done. We knew that war could not be begun and carried on without money; we knew that the Emperor had no money for that purpoſe, without receiving large remittances

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tances from Spain; and we knew that Spain could make no ſuch remittances without receiving large returns of treaſure from the Weſt Indies. The only way, therefore, to render theſe two powers incapable of diſturbing the tranquillity of Europe, was by ſending a ſquadron to the Weſt Indies, to ſtop the return of the Spaniſh galleons; and this made it neceſſary, at the ſame time, to ſend a ſquadron to the Mediterranean, for the ſecurity of our valuable poſſeſſions in that part of the world. By theſe meaſures the Emperor ſaw the impoſſibility of attacking us in any part of the world, becauſe Spain could give him no aſſiſtance, either in money or troops; and the attack made by the Spaniards upon Gibraltar was ſo feeble, that we had no occaſion to call upon our allies for aſſiſtance: a ſmall ſquadron of our own prevented their attacking it by ſea, and from their attack by land, we had nothing to fear; they might have knocked their brains out againſt inacceſſible rocks, to this very day, without bringing that fortreſs into any danger.

"I do not pretend, Sir, to be a great maſter of foreign affairs. In that poſt in which I have the honour to ſerve his majeſty, it is not my buſineſs to interfere; and as one of his majeſty's council, I have but one voice; but if I had been the ſole adviſer of the treaty of Hanover, and of all the meaſures which were taken in purſuance of it, from what I have ſaid, I hope it will appear, that I do not deſerve to be cenſured, either as a weak or a wicked miniſter on that account."

The

The next meaſures which incurred cenſure were the guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction by the ſecond treaty of Vienna, and the refuſal of the cabinet to aſſiſt the houſe of Auſtria, in conformity with the articles of that guaranty.

"As to the guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction," he ſaid, "I am really ſurpriſed to find that meaſure objected to; it was ſo univerſally approved of, both within doors and without, that till this very day I think no fault was ever found with it, unleſs it was that of being too long delayed. If it was ſo neceſſary for ſupporting the balance of power in Europe, as has been inſiſted on in this debate, to preſerve intire the dominions of the houſe of Auſtria, ſurely it was not our buſineſs to inſiſt upon a partition of them in favour of any of the princes of the empire. But if we had, could we have expected that the houſe of Auſtria would have agreed to any ſuch partition, even for the acquiſition of our guaranty? The king of Pruſſia had, it is true, a claim upon ſome lordſhips in Sileſia; but that claim was abſolutely denied by the court of Vienna, and was not at that time ſo much inſiſted on by the late king of Pruſſia. Nay, if he had lived till this time, I believe it would not now have been inſiſted on; for he acceded to that guaranty without any reſervation of that claim; therefore, I muſt look upon this as an objection, which has ſince ariſen from an accident, that could not then be foreſeen, or provided againſt.

"I muſt therefore think, Sir, that our guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction, or our manner of doing it,

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it, cannot now be objected to, nor any perſon cenſured by parliament for adviſing that meaſure. In regard to the refuſal of the cabinet to aſſiſt the houſe of Auſtria, though it was prudent and right in us to enter into that guaranty, we were not, therefore, obliged to enter into every broil the houſe of Auſtria might afterwards lead themſelves into; and therefore, we were not in honour obliged to take any ſhare in the war which the Emperor brought upon himſelf in the year 1733, nor were we in intereſt obliged to take a ſhare in that war, as long as neither ſide attempted to puſh their conqueſts farther than was conſiſtent with the balance of power in Europe, which was a caſe that did not happen. For the power of the houſe of Auſtria was not diminiſhed by the event of that war, becauſe they got Tuſcany, Parma, and Placentia, in lieu of Naples and Sicily; nor was the power of France much increaſed, becauſe Loraine was a province ſhe had taken and kept poſſeſſion of, during every war in which ſhe had been engaged.

"As to the diſputes with Spain, they had not then reached ſuch a height, as to make it neceſſary for us to come to an open rupture. We had then reaſon to hope, that all differences would be accommodated in an amicable manner; and whilſt we have any ſuch hopes, it can never be prudent for us to engage ourſelves in war, eſpecially with Spain, where we have always had a very beneficial commerce. Theſe hopes, 'tis true, Sir, at laſt proved abortive, but I never heard it was a crime

to

to hope for the beſt. This ſort of hope was the cauſe of the late convention; if Spain had performed her part of that preliminary treaty, I am ſure it would not have been wrong in us, to have hoped for a friendly accommodation, and for that end to have waited nine or ten months longer, in which time the plenipotentiaries were, by the treaty, to have adjuſted all the differences ſubſiſting between the two nations. But the failure of Spain in performing what had been agreed to by this preliminary, put an end to all our hope, and then, and not till then, it became prudent to enter into hoſtilities, which were commenced as ſoon as poſſible after the expiration of the term limited for the payment of the £.95,000. Chapter 56. 1741.

"Strong and virulent cenſures have been caſt on me, for having commenced the war without a ſingle ally; and this deficiency has been aſcribed to the multifarious treaties in which I have bewildered myſelf. But although the authors of this imputation are well apprized that all theſe treaties have been ſubmitted to and approved by parliament, yet they are now brought forward as crimes, without appealing to the judgment of parliament, and without proving or declaring that all or any of them were adviſed by me. A ſuppoſed ſole miniſter is to be condemned and puniſhed as the author of all; and what adds to the enormity is, that an attempt was made to convict him uncharged and unheard, without taking into conſideration the moſt arduous criſis which ever occurred in the annals of Europe. Sweden corrupted

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. rupted by France; Denmark tempted and wavering; the landgrave of Heſſe Caſſel almoſt gained; the king of Pruſſia, the Emperor, and the Czarina, with whom alliances had been negotiating, dead; the Auſtrian dominions claimed by Spain and Bavaria; the elector of Saxony heſitating whether he ſhould accede to the general confederacy planned by France; the court of Vienna irreſolute and indeciſive. In this critical juncture, if France enters into engagements with Pruſſia, and if the queen of Hungary heſitates and liſtens to France, are all or any of theſe events to be imputed to Engliſh counſels? and if to Engliſh counſels, why are they to be attributed to one man?

On domeſtic affairs. "I now come, Sir, to the ſecond head, the conduct of domeſtic affairs; and here a moſt heinous charge is made, that the nation has been burthened with unneceſſary expences, for the ſole purpoſe of preventing the diſcharge of our debts, and the abolition of taxes. But this attack is more to the diſhonour of the whole cabinet council than to me. If there is any ground for this imputation, it is a charge upon king, lords, and commons, as corrupted, or impoſed upon. And they have no proof of theſe allegations, but affect to ſubſtantiate them by common fame and public notoriety.

"No expence has been incurred but what has been approved of, and provided for by parliament. The public treaſure has been duly applied to the uſes to which it was appropriated by parliament, and regular accounts have been annually laid before

fore parliament, of every article of expence. If by foreign accidents, by the diſputes of foreign ſtates amongſt themſelves, or by their deſigns againſt us, the nation has often been put to an extraordinary expence, that expence cannot be ſaid to have been unneceſſary, becauſe, if by ſaving it we had expoſed the balance of power to danger, or ourſelves to an attack, it would have coſt, perhaps, a hundred times that ſum, before we could recover from that danger, or repel that attack. Chapter 56. 1741.

" In all ſuch caſes there will be a variety of opinions. I happened to be one of thoſe who thought all theſe expences neceſſary, and I had the good fortune to have the majority of both houſes of parliament on my ſide; but this, it ſeems, proceeded from bribery and corruption. Sir, if any one inſtance had been mentioned, if it had been ſhewn, that I ever offered a reward to any member of either houſe, or ever threatened to deprive any member of his office or employment, in order to influence his vote in parliament, there might have been ſome ground for this charge; but when it is ſo generally laid, I do not know what I can ſay to it, unleſs it be to deny it as generally and as poſitively as it has been aſſerted; and, thank God! till ſome proof be offered, I have the laws of the land, as well as the laws of charity, in my favour.

" Some members of both houſes have, it is true, been removed from their employments under the crown; but were they ever told, either by me,

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. or by any other of his majeſty's ſervants, that it was for oppoſing the meaſures of the adminiſtration in parliament? They were removed, becauſe his majeſty did not think fit to continue them longer in his ſervice. His majeſty had a right ſo to do, and I know no one that has a right to aſk him, What doſt thou? If his majeſty had a mind that the favours of the crown ſhould circulate, would not this of itſelf be a good reaſon for removing any of his ſervants? Would not this reaſon be approved of by the whole nation, except thoſe who happen to be the preſent poſſeſſors? I cannot, therefore, ſee how this can be imputed as a crime, or how any of the king's miniſters can be blamed for his doing what the public has no concern in; for if the public be well and faithfully ſerved, it has no buſineſs to aſk by whom.

"As to the particular charge urged againſt me, I mean that of the army debentures, I am ſurpriſed, Sir, to hear any thing relating to this affair charged upon me. Whatever blame may attach to this affair, it muſt be placed to the account of thoſe that were in power, when I was, as they call it, the country gentleman: It was by them this affair was introduced and conducted, and I came in only to pay off thoſe public ſecurities, which their management had reduced to a great diſcount, and conſequently to redeem our public credit from that reproach, which they had brought upon it. The diſcount at which theſe army debentures were negotiated, was a ſtrong and prevalent reaſon with parliament, to apply the ſinking

fund firſt to the payment of thoſe debentures, Chapter 56. 1741.
but the ſinking fund could not be applied to that purpoſe, till it began to produce ſomething conſiderable, which was not till the year 1727. That the ſinking fund was then to receive a great addition, was a fact publicly known in 1726; and if ſome people were ſufficiently quick-ſighted to foreſee, that the parliament would probably make this uſe of it, and cunning enough to make the moſt of their own foreſight, could I help it, or could they be blamed for doing ſo? But I defy my moſt inveterate enemy to prove, that I had any hand in bringing theſe debentures to a diſcount, or that I had any ſhare in the profits by buying them up.

" In reply to thoſe who confidently aſſert, that the national debt is not decreaſed ſince 1727, and that the ſinking fund has not been applied to the diſcharge of the public burthens, I can with truth declare, that a part of the debt has been paid off, and the landed intereſt has been very much eaſed, with reſpect to that moſt unequal and grievous burthen, the land tax. I ſay ſo, Sir, becauſe upon examination it will appear, that within theſe ſixteen or ſeventeen years, no leſs than £. 8,000,000 of our debt has been actually diſcharged, by the due application of the ſinking fund, and at leaſt £. 7,000,000 has been taken from that fund, and applied to the eaſe of the land tax. For if it had not been applied to the current ſervice, we muſt have ſupplied that ſervice by increaſing the land tax; and as the ſinking fund was originally de-

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ſigned for paying off our debts, and eaſing us of our taxes, the application of it in eaſe of the land tax, was certainly as proper and as neceſſary an uſe as could be made. And I little thought that giving relief to landed gentlemen, would have been brought againſt me as a crime.

On the conduct of the war.

"I ſhall now advert to the third topic of accuſation, the conduct of the war. I have already ſtated in what manner, and under what circumſtances hoſtilities commenced; and as I am neither general nor admiral, as I have nothing to do either with our navy or army, I am ſure I am not anſwerable for the proſecution of it. But were I to anſwer for every thing, no fault could, I think, be found with my conduct in the proſecution of the war. It has from the beginning been carried on with as much vigour, and as great care of our trade, as was conſiſtent with our ſafety at home, and with the circumſtances we were in at the beginning of the war. If our attacks upon the enemy were too long delayed, or if they have not been ſo vigorous or ſo frequent as they ought to have been, thoſe only are to blame who have for many years been haranguing againſt ſtanding armies; for without a ſufficient number of regular troops in proportion to the numbers kept up by our neighbours, I am ſure we can neither defend ourſelves, nor offend our enemies. On the ſuppoſed miſcarriages of the war, ſo unfairly ſtated, and ſo unjuſtly imputed to me, I could, with great eaſe, frame an incontrovertible defence; but as I have treſpaſſed ſo long on the time of the houſe,

houſe, I ſhall not weaken the effect of that forcible exculpation ſo generouſly and diſintereſtedly advanced by the right honourable gentleman who ſo meritoriouſly preſides at the admiralty. Chapter 56. 1741.

" If my whole adminiſtration is to be ſcrutiniſed and arraigned, why are the moſt favourable parts to be omitted? If facts are to be accumulated on one ſide, why not on the other? And why may not I be permitted to ſpeak in my *own favour?* Was I not called by the voice of the king and the nation to remedy the fatal effects of the South Sea project, and to ſupport declining credit? Was I not placed at the head of the treaſury, when the revenues were in the greateſt confuſion? Is credit revived, and does it now flouriſh? Is it not at an incredible height, and if ſo, to whom muſt that circumſtance be attributed? Has not tranquillity been preſerved both at home and abroad, notwithſtanding a moſt unreaſonable and violent oppoſition? Has the true intereſt of the nation been purſued, or has trade flouriſhed? Have gentlemen produced one inſtance of this exorbitant power, of the influence which I extend to all parts of the nation, of the tyranny with which I oppreſs thoſe who oppoſe, and the liberality with which I reward thoſe who ſupport me? But having firſt inveſted me with a kind of mock dignity, and ſtyled me a prime miniſter, they impute to me an unpardonable abuſe of that chimerical authority which they only have created and conferred. If they are really perſuaded that the army is annually eſtabliſhed by me, that I

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. have the ſole diſpoſal of poſts and honours, that I employ this power in the deſtruction of liberty, and the diminution of commerce, let me awaken them from their deluſion. Let me expoſe to their view the real condition of the public weal; let me ſhew them that the crown has made no encroachments, that all ſupplies have been granted by parliament, that all queſtions have been debated with the ſame freedom as before the fatal period, in which my counſels are ſaid to have gained the aſcendancy: An aſcendancy from which they deduce the loſs of trade, the approach of ſlavery, the preponderance of prerogative, and the extenſion of influence. But I am far from believing that they feel thoſe apprehenſions which they ſo earneſtly labour to communicate to others, and I have too high an opinion of their ſagacity not to conclude that, even in their own judgment, they are complaining of grievances that they do not ſuffer, and promoting rather their private intereſt than that of the public.

"What is this unbounded ſole power which is imputed to me? How has it diſcovered itſelf, or how has it been proved?

"What have been the effects of the corruption, ambition, and avarice, with which I am ſo abundantly charged?

"Have I ever been ſuſpected of being corrupted? A ſtrange phænomenon, a corrupter himſelf not corrupt! Is ambition imputed to me? Why then do I ſtill continue a commoner? I, who refuſed a white ſtaff and a peerage. I had, indeed, like

like to have forgotten the little ornament about my shoulders, which gentlemen have so repeatedly mentioned in terms of sarcastic obloquy. But surely, though this may be regarded with envy or indignation in another place, it cannot be supposed to raise any resentment in this house, where many may be pleased to see those honours which their ancestors have worn, restored again to the commons. Chapter 36. 1741.

"Have I given any symptoms of an avaricious disposition? Have I obtained any grants from the crown since I have been placed at the head of the treasury? Has my conduct been different from that which others in the same station would have followed? Have I acted wrong in giving the place of auditor to my son, and in providing for my own family? I trust that their advancement will not be imputed to me as a crime, unless it shall be proved that I placed them in offices of trust and responsibility for which they were unfit.

"But while I unequivocally deny that I am sole and prime minister, and that to my influence and direction all the measures of government must be attributed, yet I will not shrink from the responsibility which attaches to the post I have the honour to hold; and should, during the long period in which I have sat upon this bench, any one step taken by government be proved to be either disgraceful or disadvantageous to the nation, I am ready to hold myself accountable.

"To conclude, Sir, though I shall always be proud of the honour of any trust or confidence

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from his majeſty, yet I ſhall always be ready to remove from his councils and preſence, when he thinks fit; and therefore I ſhould think myſelf very little concerned in the event of the preſent queſtion, if it were not for the encroachment that will thereby be made upon the prerogatives of the crown. But I muſt think, that an addreſs to his majeſty to remove one of his ſervants, without ſo much as alledging any particular crime againſt him, is one of the greateſt encroachments that was ever made upon the prerogatives of the crown; and therefore, for the ſake of my maſter, without any regard for my own, I hope all thoſe that have a due regard for our conſtitution, and for the rights and prerogatives of the crown, without which our conſtitution cannot be preſerved, will be againſt this motion."

Motion negatived.

This ſpeech made a deep impreſſion on the houſe. It was delivered in a moſt animated and faſcinating manner, and with more dignity than he uſually aſſumed. The motion was negatived by 290 againſt 106*; a great and unuſual majority, which proceeded from the ſchiſm between the Tories and the Whigs, and the ſeceſſion of Shippen and his friends.

Motion in the lords.

The ſame motion was made by lord Carteret the ſame day in the houſe of lords, and ſupported with more pertinacity and vigour than in the commons. The ſchiſm between the Tories and Whigs had not extended to that houſe, and the lords in oppoſition acted uniformly and conſiſtently in one compact phalanx.

The

* Journals.

The principal ſpeakers againſt the miniſter were, the dukes of Bedford and Argyle, the earls of Sandwich, Weſtmoreland, Berkſhire, Carliſle, Abingdon, and Halifax, and the lords Haverſham and Bathurſt; the oppoſers of the motion were, the lord chancellor, the dukes of Newcaſtle and Devonſhire, the biſhop of Saliſbury (Sherlock) the earl of Ilay, and lord Hervey.

Negatived.

The motion was negatived by 108 againſt 59, but a warm proteſt was ſigned by 31 peers. The prince of Wales was preſent, but did not vote; and it was remarked that ſeveral peers who had places under government, particularly the earl of Wilmington, did not divide with either party.*.

Immediately after the motion was thus diſpoſed of, the duke of Marlborough roſe, and moved to reſolve, "that any attempt to inflict any kind of puniſhment on any perſon, without allowing him an opportunity to make his defence, or without proof of any crime or miſdemeanour committed by him, is contrary to natural juſtice, the fundamental laws of this realm, and the ancient eſtabliſhed uſage of parliaments; and it is a high infringement on the liberties of the ſubject."

The truth of this propoſition was admitted by the warmeſt friends of the laſt motion; but, contrary to all principles of reaſoning, they inſiſted upon the treaties that lay before them, as being full evidences againſt the miniſter, but without offering to prove that thoſe treaties had been ſolely

* Lords' Debates. Tindal.

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ſolely conducted by him, or that they were detrimental in themſelves to the honour and intereſt of the nation. They made, however, a faint endeavour to ſet aſide the motion upon the previous queſtion, but it was carried, though ſtrong proteſts were entered upon both queſtions *.

Conduct and anecdotes of Shippen.

In this whole tranſaction, the greateſt ſurpriſe was excited by the conduct of Shippen.

His ſeceſſion expoſed him to much obloquy from the party whom he deſerted. Some inferred, that his abſence was purchaſed by a bribe †, and did not ſcruple to affirm, that he received an annual penſion from government; others have been ſo unjuſt as to aſſert, that this rumour was induſtriouſly raiſed by Walpole, to decry his integrity, and diminiſh his influence ‡. It might be ſufficient to refute this unjuſt reflection, by obſerving, that his wife's fortune placed him far above all temptation, and that he had exhibited a ſtrong proof of diſintereſtedneſs at a very trying period. When Shippen was committed to the Tower, for declaring that the only infelicity in his majeſty's reign was, that he was unacquainted with our language and conſtitution, and that the ſpeech from the throne was rather calculated for the meridian of Germany, than of Great Britain; the prince of Wales, then diſſatisfied with his father, ſent general Churchill, his groom of the bed-chamber, to him, with the offer of a preſent of

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 429.

† Opinions of the ducheſs of Marlborough.

‡ Sheridan's Life of Swift, p. 222.

of £. 1,000; which Shippen declined *. That he was honeſt and inflexible, is undoubted! Even Walpole himſelf has atteſted this truth, by repeatedly declaring, not only while he was at the head of affairs, but after his reſignation, not only during the life of Shippen, but after his death, that he would not ſay who was corrupted, but he would ſay who *was* not corruptible, that man was Shippen †. Chapter 56. 1741.

The real cauſe of his ſeceſſion, I am enabled to aſcertain, from the account of a perſon nearly related to him: Sir Robert Walpole having diſcovered a correſpondence, which one of Shippen's friends carried on with the Pretender, Shippen called on the miniſter, and deſired him to ſave his friend. Sir Robert willingly complied: and then ſaid, Mr. Shippen, I cannot deſire you to vote with the adminiſtration, for with your principles, I have no right to expect it. But I only require, whenever any queſtion is brought forward in the houſe perſonally affecting me, that you will recollect the favour I have now granted you. It is likewiſe to be obſerved, that this was only a temporary truce, for he ſoon reſumed his accuſtomed oppoſition, and gave his aſſiſtance to thoſe ſtrenuous meaſures, which drove the miniſter from the helm.

If uniformity of principles, and conſiſtency of conduct, be admitted as a merit, William Shippen

* Etough, from Dr. Midleton, to whom it was communicated by Shippen.

† From lord Orford.

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pen certainly deſerves that eulogium as much or more than any other member of the houſe of commons. Yet in conſidering the perſons who formed the minority, we ought to be on our guard, leſt we miſtake the heat of party for true patriotiſm; and we ſhould alſo be wary in truſting to expreſſions which are become almoſt cant words, and have been handed from one writer to another, until they have been adopted as unqueſtionable truths. Thus he is called by various writers, "*the Engliſh Cato*," "*inflexible patriot*;" and Pope has ſaid of him,

> I love to pour out all myſelf, as plain
> As *honeſt Shippen*, or downright Montagne.

But though we may allow him to be honeſt and incorruptible, yet the appellation of true patriot, can by no means be juſtly conferred on him; unleſs we ſhould ſtyle that man a patriot, who was notoriouſly diſaffected to the proteſtant ſucceſſion, and publicly known to be in the intereſts of the Pretender; who did not affect even to conceal his ſentiments, who in the heterogeneous meetings of the oppoſition, diſguſted the old Whigs with declarations on the neceſſity of reſtoring the Stuarts *; and who in company with his intimate friends, was often heard to declare, that he waited for orders from Rome, before he would give his vote in the houſe of commons.

The family of Shippen was ſettled in Cheſhire. His father, who was rector of Stockport, had four ſons, one of whom was preſident of Braſen Noſe college,

* From the biſhop of Saliſbury.

college, Oxford, a man of diſtinguiſhed abilities, and of the ſame principles with his brother; and one daughter, who married Mr. Leyborne, a gentleman of reſpectable family in Yorkſhire. Chapter 56. 1741.

William Shippen was born about the year 1672, and received his education at Stockport ſchool, which was conducted with great credit by a maſter whoſe name was Dale. He firſt came into parliament in 1707, for Bramber in Suſſex, in the place of John Aſgill, who was expelled for blaſphemy, by the intereſt of lord Plymouth, whoſe ſon Dixie Windſor, was his brother-in-law. He again repreſented that borough in 1710. In 1713, when he was choſen for Saltaſh in Cornwall, probably by government intereſt, but waved his ſeat in 1714, on being elected for Newton in Lancaſhire, through the intereſt of Mr. Legh of Lime Park, in Cheſhire, whoſe aunt, lady Clarke, was married to his brother Dr. Shippen, which place he continued to repreſent until his death. His paternal eſtate was very ſmall, not exceeding £.400 a year, but he obtained a fortune of not leſs than 70,000 by his wife, who was daughter and coheireſs of Sir Richard Stote, knight, of the county of Northumberland, by whom he left no children. His way of living was in all reſpects ſimple and œconomical. Before his marriage he never exceeded his income, and even afterwards his expences were not proportionable to his eſtate.

For a ſhort period he had apartments in Holland-houſe, from whence he dates ſeveral of his letters to biſhop Atterbury, with whom he maintained a conſtant

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. conſtant correſpondence, during his exile *. And William Morrice mentions him in one of his letters as a perſon who continued fixed to his principles, or as he expreſſes himſelf, *as honeſt as ever.* He ſeems to have had no country reſidence, except a hired houſe on Richmond-hill, but made excurſions in ſummer to his wife's relations in Northumberland. His uſual place of abode was London, in the latter period of his life, in Norfolk Street, and his houſe was the rendezvous for perſons of rank, learning, and abilities; his manner was pleaſing and dignified, and his converſation was replete with vivacity and wit.

Shippen and Sir Robert Walpole had always a perſonal regard for each other. He was frequently heard to ſay, Robin and I are two honeſt men. He is for king George, and I for king James, but thoſe men with long cravats (meaning Sandys, Sir John Ruſhout, Gybbon, and others) only deſire places, either under king George or king James.

By the accounts of thoſe † who had heard him in the houſe of commons, his manner was highly energetic and ſpirited as to ſentiment and expreſſion; but he generally ſpoke in a low tone of voice, with too great rapidity, and held his glove before his mouth. His ſpeeches uſually contained ſome pointed period, which peculiarly applied to the ſubject in debate, and which he uttered with great animation.

Shippen publiſhed ſeveral pamphlets, the titles of which I cannot aſcertain: he may be ſuppoſed to

* Intercepted Letters. Orford Papers.

† From the late earl of Orford.

to have obtained ſome reputation as a poet, by the mention which Sheffield, duke of Buckingham, makes of him in his poem, "The Election of a Poet Laureat:" Chapter 56. 1741.

To Shippen, Apollo was cold with reſpect,
But ſaid in a greater aſſembly he ſhin'd:
As places were things he had ever declin'd.

Shippen wrote two political poems. Faction Diſplayed, and Moderation Diſplayed. In the firſt he draws the characters of the great Whig lords, under the names of the principal Romans who were engaged in Catiline's conſpiracy. This ſatire is ſevere and cauſtic, but the lines are, in general, rough and inharmonious. The concluding paſſage, which refers to the death of the duke of Glouceſter, is not without merit:

So by the courſe of the revolving ſpheres,
Whene'er a new diſcover'd ſtar appears;
Aſtronomers, with pleaſure and amaze,
Upon the infant luminary gaze.
They find their heavens enlarg'd, and wait from thence
Some bleſt, ſome more than common influence;
But ſuddenly, alas! the fleeting light
Retiring, leaves their hopes involv'd in endleſs night.

His wife was extremely penurious, and from a peculiarity of temper, unwilling to mix in ſociety. She was much courted by queen Caroline, but having imbibed from her huſband a great independency of principle, oſtentatiouſly affected to decline all intercourſe with the court.

The fortune which he received with his wife, and the money which he had ſaved, came to her on his death, in conſequence of a compact, that the ſurvivor

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vivor ſhould inherit the whole. As neither he nor any of his brothers left any ſons, his paternal eſtate paſſed to his nephew Dr. Leyborne, principal of Alban-hall, Oxford, and Mr. Leyborne, a merchant of the factory at Liſbon. Shippen's widow lived to a great age: her infirmities being ſuch as to prevent her making a will, her ample fortune therefore devolved on her ſiſter Mrs. Dixie Windſor *.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-SEVENTH:

1741.

Proceedings of Parliament on the Auſtrian Subſidy.—Grant of Three hundred thouſand Pounds to the Queen of Hungary.—Her Inflexibility —and diſaſtrous Situation.

Proceedings on the Auſtrian ſubſidy.

THE only parliamentary meaſure in this ſeſſion which deſerves farther notice, was the grant of a ſubſidy to the queen of Hungary, which finally involved England in a war with France. It was undoubtedly neither conſonant to the wiſhes or ſentiments of the miniſter, who had earneſtly exerted himſelf to bring about an accommodation between Pruſſia and Auſtria, to promote a meaſure calculated to encourage the obſtinacy of Maria Thereſa at a moment when ſhe ſeemed wavering and

* Shippen's niece, Miſs Leyborne, was married to the Rev. Mr. Taylor. She was mother to Mrs. Willes, widow of the late learned and much reſpected judge, to whom I am principally indebted for theſe anecdotes: A collateral branch of the family of Shippen is ſettled in Philadelphia, one of them married Laurens, who was preſident of the congreſs, and another, the American general Arnold.

and irreſolute. But the voice of the nation loudly echoed the unceaſing cry of oppoſition in favour of Maria Thereſa. The king was alarmed for his German dominions, the majority of the cabinet inclined to vigorous meaſures, and it was imagined that a decided reſolution of parliament to ſupport the houſe of Auſtria, would intimidate the king of Pruſſia, and induce him to lower his terms of accommodation. Chapter 57. 1741.

In conſequence of theſe prevailing ſentiments, the king opened the ſubject in a ſpeech from the throne. He ſaid, April 8.

" At the opening of this ſeſſion, I took notice to you of the death of the late Emperor, and of my reſolution to adhere to the engagements I am under, in order to the maintaining of the balance of power, and the liberties of Europe, on that important occaſion. The aſſurances I received from you, in return to this communication, were perfectly agreeable to that zeal and vigour which this parliament has always exerted in the ſupport of the honour and intereſt of my crown and kingdoms, and of the common cauſe. King's ſpeech.

" The war which has ſince broke out, and been carried on in part of the Auſtrian dominions, and the various and extenſive claims which are publicly made on the late Emperor's ſucceſſion, are new events, that require the utmoſt care and attention, as they may involve all Europe in a bloody war, and *in conſequence, expoſe the dominions of ſuch princes as ſhall take part in ſupport of the pragmatic ſanction to imminent and immediate danger.* The queen of Hun-

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gary has already made a requisition of the twelve thousand men, expressly stipulated by treaty; and thereupon I have demanded of the king of Denmark, and of the king of Sweden, as Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, their respective bodies of troops, consisting of six thousand men each, to be in readiness to march forthwith to the assistance of her Hungarian majesty. I am also concerting such further measures as may obviate and disappoint the dangerous designs and attempts that may be forming, or carried on, in favour of any unjust pretensions, to the prejudice of the house of Austria. In this complicated and uncertain state of things, many incidents may arise, during the time when, by reason of the approaching conclusion of this parliament, it may be impossible for me to have your advice and assistance, which may make it necessary for me to enter into still larger expences for maintaining the pragmatic sanction. In a conjuncture so critical, I have thought it proper to lay these important considerations before you; and to desire the concurrence of my parliament, in enabling me to contribute in the most effectual manner to the support of the queen of Hungary, the preventing by all reasonable means the subversion of the house of Austria, and to the maintaining the liberties and balance of power in Europe *."

Debate on motion for address.

When the commons returned, Mr. Clutterbuck † recapitulated the occasion which had induced the king to make this application. He expatiated on

* Journals. Chandler.

† A lord of the treasury.

on the ambitious designs of France, exposed the danger of Europe from the destruction of the house of Austria, the injustice of Prussia in the invasion of Silesia, and the wisdom and propriety of asserting the pragmatic sanction, and fulfilling their engagements with the house of Austria. As by this conduct, he observed, the king would expose his electoral dominions, and as the danger would be increased not by any disputes with the neighbouring princes, but by his firmness in asserting the general rights of Europe, and as the consequences of this conduct would be chiefly beneficial to Great Britain, the house ought to support him in the prosecution of this design: He concluded, "I hope every gentleman in this house, will agree with me, that we ought to declare our approbation of these measures, in such terms as may shew the world, that those who shall dare to obstruct them, must resolve to incur the resentment of this nation, and expose themselves to all the opposition that the parliament of Great Britain can send forth against them. We ought to pronounce that the territories of Hanover will be considered on this occasion as the dominions of England, and that any attack on one or the other will be equally resented. I therefore move, that an humble address be presented, "to express our dutiful sense of his majesty's regard for the rights of the queen of Hungary, and for maintaining the pragmatic sanction; to declare our concurrence in the prudent measures, which his majesty is pursuing for the preservation of the liberties and balance of Chapter 57. 1741.

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power in Europe; to acknowledge his majeſty's wiſdom and reſolution, in not ſuffering himſelf to be diverted from ſteadily perſevering in his juſt purpoſes of fulfilling his engagements with the houſe of Auſtria*."

Fox ſupported the addreſs, and obſerved, "If the propoſed oppoſition to the king of Pruſſia ſhould incite him, or any other power, to an invaſion of his majeſty's foreign dominions, we cannot refuſe them our protection and aſſiſtance; for as they ſuffer for the cauſe which we engaged to ſupport, and ſuffer only by our meaſures, we are, at leaſt as allies, obliged by the laws of equity, and the general compacts of mankind, to arm in their defence; and what may be claimed by the common right of allies, we ſhall ſurely not deny them, only becauſe they own the ſame monarch with ourſelves."

As for ſome time the oppoſition had been clamorous in arraigning the miniſter for not ſupporting the queen of Hungary, they could not conſiſtently reſiſt the motion. But fortunately, the expreſſion in the ſpeech alluding to Hanover, and the ſpecific declaration of the member who moved the addreſs, that the king's German dominions were the object of defence, gave them an opportunity of deſcanting on the popular topic of Hanoverian intereſt, without appearing to decry the propriety of ſupporting the pragmatic ſanction, or arraigning the principles on which the motion was founded.

Pulteney

* Gentleman's Magazine for 1742.

Chapter 57. 1741.

Pulteney readily allowed the ambitious deſigns of France, and the neceſſity of counteracting them. He then obſerved, that the only hopes of effecting that beneficial purpoſe reſted on the houſe of Auſtria. For this reaſon the uniform exertions of this country had been employed in aggrandiſing that power, as a counterpoiſe to the increaſing weight of the houſe of Bourbon. But this wiſe plan was wholly overturned, and the fabric which this country had ſo long and ſo aſſiduouſly laboured to erect, was at once deſtroyed, by the treaty of Hanover, and from that time, almoſt to the preſent moment, almoſt all our exertions had been uniformly directed to the ſame miſchievous purpoſe. "By what impulſe," he added, "or by what infatuation, theſe aſſerters of liberty, theſe enemies of France, theſe guardians of the balance of power, were on the ſudden prevailed on to declare in favour of the power whom they had ſo long thought it their chief intereſt and higheſt honour to oppoſe, muſt be diſcovered by ſagacity ſuperior to mine. But after ſuch perplexity of councils, and ſuch fluctuation of conduct, if our concurrence is neceſſary to increaſe his majeſty's influence on the continent, to animate the friends of the houſe of Auſtria, or to repreſs the diſturbers of the public tranquillity, I ſhall willingly unite with the moſt zealous advocates for the adminiſtration in any vote of approbation or aſſiſtance, not contrary to the act of ſettlement, that important and well concerted act, by which the preſent family was advanced to the throne, and by which it was provided that England

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. land ſhall never be involved in a war for the enlargement or protection of the dominions of Hanover, dominions from which we never expected nor received any benefit, and for which therefore nothing ought to be either ſuffered or hazarded.

"If it ſhould again be neceſſary to form a confederacy, and to unite the powers of Europe againſt the houſe of Bourbon, that ambitious and reſtleſs family, by which the repoſe of the world is almoſt every day interrupted, which is inceſſantly labouring againſt the happineſs of human nature, and ſeeking every hour an opportunity of new encroachments, I declare that I ſhall not only, with the greateſt cheerfulneſs, bear my ſhare of the public expence, but endeavour to reconcile others to their part of the calamities of war. This I have advanced, in confidence that ſufficient care ſhall be taken, that in any new alliance, we ſhall be parties, not principals, that the expence of war, as the advantage of victory, ſhall be common; and that thoſe who unite with us ſhall be our allies, not our mercenaries."

The reply of the miniſter was ſpecific and manly: "We are obliged, by this treaty, to ſupply the houſe of Auſtria with twelve thouſand men, and the Dutch, who were engaged in it, by our example, have promiſed a ſupply of five thouſand. This force, joined to thoſe armies which the large dominions of that family enable them to raiſe, were conceived ſufficient to repel any enemy by whom their rights ſhould be invaded. But becauſe in affairs of ſuch importance nothing is to be left to hazard,

hazard, becauſe the preſervation of the equipoiſe of power, on which the liberties of almoſt all mankind, who can call themſelves free, muſt be acknowledged to depend, ought to be rather certain, than barely probable; it is ſtipulated farther, both by the Dutch and ourſelves, that if the ſupplies ſpecified in the firſt article ſhall appear inſufficient, we ſhall unite our whole force in the defence of our ally, and ſtruggle once more for independence, with ardour proportioned to the importance of our cauſe. Chap. 57. 1741.

" By theſe ſtipulations, no engagements have been formed that can be imagined to have been prohibited by the act of ſettlement, by which it is provided, that the houſe of Hanover ſhall not plunge this nation into a war, for the ſake of their foreign dominions, without the conſent of the parliament; for this war is by no means entered upon for the particular ſecurity of Hanover, but for the general advantage of Europe, to repreſs the ambition of the French, and to preſerve ourſelves and our poſterity from the moſt abject dependance upon a nation, exaſperated againſt us by a long oppoſition and hereditary hatred.

" Nor is the act of ſettlement only preſerved unviolated, by the reaſons of the preſent alliance, but by the regular concurrence of the parliament, which his majeſty has deſired, notwithſtanding his indubitable right of making peace and war by his own authority. I cannot, therefore, imagine upon what pretence it can be urged that the law, which requires that no war ſhall be made on account of the Hanoverian dominions without the conſent of

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. parliament is violated, when it is evident that the war is made upon other motives, and the concurrence of the parliament is ſolemnly deſired."

Sandys having made the ſame objection as Pulteney, and obſerved that the motion was inconſiſtent with the truſt repoſed in the commons by the conſtitution, who owe allegiance to the king of Great Britain and not to the elector of Hanover, was anſwered by Horace Walpole, who defended the treaty of Hanover. After a few remarks from Viner, againſt the propriety of oppoſing the king of Pruſſia's demands, before they were fully underſtood, lord Gage concluded the debate by obſerving, "I have always been taught that allegiance to my prince is conſiſtent with fidelity to my country, that the intereſt of the king and the people of Great Britain is the ſame, and that he only is a true ſubject of the crown, who is a ſteady promoter of the happineſs of the nation.

"For this reaſon I think it neceſſary to declare, that Hanover is always to be conſidered as a ſovereignty ſeparate from that of England, and as a country with laws and intereſts diſtinct from ours; and that it is the duty of the repreſentatives of this nation, to take care that intereſts ſo different may never be confounded, and that England may incur no expence of which Hanover alone can enjoy the advantage. If the elector of Hanover ſhould be engaged in war with any of the neighbouring ſovereigns, who ſhould be enabled by a victory to enter into the country, and carry the terrors of war through all his territories, it would by no means be neceſſary for this nation to interpoſe;

terpoſe; for the elector of Hanover might loſe his dominions without any diſadvantage or diſhonour to the king or people of England." Chapter 57. 1741.

It was evident that the minority, in making theſe obſervations, did not intend to oppoſe the motion, but only to caſt a reproach upon adminiſtration; for the queſtion was carried without a diviſion *. Addreſs carried.

The addreſs being carried, the miniſter moved for an aid of £. 300,000 to the queen of Hungary. He briefly ſtated the neceſſity of preventing the diſmemberment of the Auſtrian dominions, in which the intereſts of Great Britain were neceſſarily involved. Shippen oppoſed the motion, in a ſpeech replete with ſarcaſtic irony. He ſaid, "though it cannot be expected I have forgotten the reſentment which I have formerly drawn upon myſelf by an open declaration of my ſentiments with regard to Hanover †, I ſtand up again with equal confidence, to make my proteſtations againſt any interpoſition in the affairs of that country, and to avow my diſlike of the promiſe lately made to defend it: A promiſe, inconſiſtent, in my opinion, with that important and inviolable law, the act of ſettlement! A promiſe, which, if it could have been foreknown, would, perhaps, have for ever precluded April 13. Auſtrian ſubſidy granted.

* It is remarkable that Chandler has omitted to mention this debate, although it is given in the Gentleman's Magazine, from which publication he took the ſucceeding debate.—Tindal ſlightly alludes to it, in a manner, however, which authenticates the account in the Gentleman's Magazine. Neither Smollett or Belſham take the leaſt notice of it.

† Alluding to his commitment to the tower. See vol. 1. chap. 17. p. 194.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. precluded from the ſucceſſion, that illuſtrious family, to which we owe ſuch numberleſs bleſſings, ſuch continued felicity. Far be it from me to inſinuate that we can be too grateful to his majeſty, or too zealous in our adherence to him; only let us remember that true gratitude conſiſts in real benefits, in promoting the true intereſt of him to whom we are indebted; and ſurely by hazarding the welfare of Great Britain in defence of Hanover, we ſhall very little conſult the advantage or promote the greatneſs of our king.

" It is well known how inconſiderable, in the ſight of thoſe by whom the ſucceſſion was eſtabliſhed, Hanover appeared in compariſon with Great Britain. Thoſe men, to whom even their enemies have ſeldom denied praiſe for knowledge and capacity, and who have been ſo loudly celebrated by many who have joined in the laſt addreſs, for their honeſt zeal, and the love of their country, enacted, that the king of Great Britain ſhould never viſit thoſe important territories, which we have ſo ſolemnly promiſed to defend, at the hazard of their happineſs. It was evidently their deſign that our ſovereign, engroſſed by the care of his new ſubjects, a care which, as they reaſonably imagined, would ariſe from gratitude for dignity and power ſo liberally conferred, ſhould in time forget that corner of the earth, on which his anceſtors had reſided, and act, not as elector of Hanover, but as king of Great Britain, as the governor of a mighty nation, and the lord of large dominions.

"It was expreſsly determined, that this nation ſhould never be involved in a war for the defence of the dominions on the continent, and doubtleſs the ſame policy that has reſtrained us from extending our conqueſts in countries, from which ſome advantages might be received, ought to forbid all expenſive and hazardous meaſures, for the ſake of territories from whence no benefit can be reaped *."

Viner followed Shippen in oppoſing the grant, and after conſidering the diſpute between Auſtria and Pruſſia as a buſineſs in which England had no immediate concern, exclaimed, "Are we to ſtand up ſingly in defence of the pragmatic ſanction, to fight the quarrel of others, or live in perpetual war that our neighbours may be at peace †?"

The miniſter and his friends took no notice of the indecorous alluſions in Shippen's ſpeech, but defended the motion on the ground of national faith. After a few obſervations from Pulteney, who ſupported the expediency of the meaſure, and ſome farther remarks from the miniſter, the queſtion was carried without a diviſion.

This grant, however founded on juſtice and conſiſtent with national honour, muſt be lamented as premature, becauſe it fruſtrated the wiſe plan which Walpole was forming for the pacification of Germany. He ſaw and lamented the difficulties which

Effects of the grant.

* Chandler.

† Ibid. This debate is greatly miſrepreſented by Belſham. He obſerves, "HONEST SHIPPEN *only* ventured to oppoſe this wild and wanton waſte of public money." To ſupport this aſſertion he has transferred Viner's ſpeech to the firſt ſeſſion of the next parliament. See Belſham, vol. 2. p. 44. 46

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. which prevented an accommodation with Pruſſia; he ſtrongly inculcated the neceſſity of a grand confederacy againſt France, and conſcious that all alliances to that purpoſe would prove inefficient and ineffectual unleſs Pruſſia was included, he laboured to overcome the pertinacious reſiſtance of the queen of Hungary. By his direction, Horace Walpole had frequent conferences with count Oſtein *, the Imperial miniſter in London; in which he fully explained the ſtate of Europe, the deſigns of France, and the peculiar ſituation of England. He repreſented in ſuch ſtrong terms the fatal conſequences to be apprehended from the hoſtility of the king of Pruſſia, and the good effects to be derived from his alliance, as fully convinced the Auſtrian miniſter. Oſtein declared his ready aſſent to the force of theſe arguments, and promiſed to place them in ſo favourable a light as ſhould induce the queen to cloſe with the propoſitions of Pruſſia. But this deſign was fatally counteracted by the ſpirit of Maria Thereſa, by her reliance on the promiſes of France, and particularly by the ill-judged enthuſiaſm of the Britiſh nation.

The vote of £. 300,000 had ſcarcely paſſed the commons, before lord Carteret aſſured Oſtein, that the grant of that ſubſidy was not owing to the good diſpoſition of the miniſtry, but extorted by the unanimous call of parliament, and the general voice of the people. Accordingly, the Auſtrian miniſter

* Letter from Horace Walpole to the duke of Cumberland, Nov. 29, 1746. Walpole Papers.

miniſter inſtantly changed his opinion, and inſtead of ſeconding the efforts of Walpole to perſuade his miſtreſs to enter into an accommodation with the king of Pruſſia, encouraged her to perſevere in rejecting his demands, becauſe the Britiſh nation would pour out the laſt drop of their blood, and ſpend their laſt penny in ſupport of her juſt cauſe*.

Diſaſtrous ſtate of the houſe of Auſtria.

In conſequence of her inflexibility, the king of Pruſſia continued his inroads; he over-ran and conquered the remaining part of Sileſia, and the grand confederacy, planned and cenſolidated by France, attacked the Auſtrian dominions on all ſides. The elector of Bavaria, at the head of 70,000 troops, took Paſſau and Lintz, ſummoned Vienna to ſurrender, made himſelf maſter of Bohemia, was inaugurated king at Prague, and expected every moment his elevation to the Imperial throne. Two French armies poured like a torrent over the countries of Germany. The one, under marſhal Broglio, joined the elector of Bavaria, and took poſſeſſion of Prague; the other, led by marſhal Maillebois, hovered on the banks of the Rhine, and threatening to ſpread themſelves over Weſtphalia, awed the electorate of Hanover, and compelled George the Second to deſert Maria Thereſa, and to accept a neutrality, which was condemned both at home and abroad as a ſcandalous and puſillanimous meaſure.

The king of Sardinia threatened hoſtilities, and a Spaniſh army, under the marquis of Montemar, marched

* Horace Walpole to the duke of Cumberland. Walpole Papers.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. marched from Naples towards the frontiers of the Milaneſe; while the infant, Don Philip, at the head of a conſiderable corps, was preparing to penetrate through Dauphiné and Savoy, into Auſtrian Lombardy.

Maria Thereſa, deſerted by Ruſſia and the United Provinces, and by all her allies, except Great Britain, quitted Vienna, which was preparing for a ſiege, took refuge at Preſburg, and threw herſelf on the affection and zeal of her Hungarian ſubjects. Compelled by imperious neceſſity, ſhe purchaſed the neutrality of Pruſſia, by the ceſſion of lower Sileſia. Her ſituation was truly deplorable, and her diſaſters rebounded on the miniſter. To his ſiniſter auſpices it was attributed that the conſtellation of the houſe of Bourbon ſeemed aſcending to its zenith, and the ſtars of England and Auſtria declining towards the horizon.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-EIGHTH:

1741.

Diſſolution of Parliament.—State of the Miniſtry.—Walpole deſerted or ſecretly thwarted by many of his former Friends.—Succeſsful Exertions of the Oppoſition.—Weſtminſter Election.—Schiſm in the Cabinet.—Neutrality of Hanover.—Supineneſs of Walpole.—Clamours againſt him.

ON the 25th of April, the king put an end to the laſt ſeſſion of this parliament, in a ſpeech from the throne, in which, after thanking them for the zeal with which they had ſupported the meaſures of government, he added, "I will immediately give the neceſſary orders for calling a new parliament. There is not any thing I ſet ſo high a value upon, as the love and affection of my people; in which I have ſo entire a confidence, that it is with great ſatisfaction, I ſee this opportunity put into their hands, of giving me freſh proofs of it, in the choice of their repreſentatives *." Cloſe of the parliament.

Writs were iſſued for electing a new houſe of commons, returnable the 25th of June.

On the expiration of the parliament commenced the ſtruggle of the contending parties, which was to terminate in the removal, or the firm eſtabliſhment of Walpole. Conteſt of parties.

Notwithſtanding a ſtrong remonſtrance from Sir Robert Walpole, the king embarked for his German dominions. May 7. The king goes to Hanover.

The

* Journals, vol. 12. p. 337.

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Precarious situation of Walpole.

The miniſter was left in a precarious ſituation, to manage the elections, in the midſt of an unſucceſsful war, at variance with the majority of the cabinet, and with the general ſpirit of the nation againſt him, at a time when the fears of Jacobitiſm, and the dread of a popiſh Pretender, had begun to ſubſide. In this emergency, either betrayed by his pretended friends, deſerted by thoſe who ought to have ſupported him, deceived in imagining that the triumphant majority which had thrown out the motion to remove him, was an indication of the people's affection, or conceiving that a firm coalition between the Tories and diſaffected Whigs, could not take place in time to oppoſe him, he abandoned himſelf to an inconſiderate ſecurity, and neglected to take his uſual precautions.

Conteſted election for Weſtminſter.

The firſt great oppoſition to government took its riſe in the city of Weſtminſter, where the court was ſuppoſed to poſſeſs an unbounded influence. It had been uſual for the electors to return the two members who were recommended by the crown. The repreſentatives in the laſt parliament were, Sir Charles Wager, firſt lord of the admiralty, and lord Sundon, a lord of the treaſury; and it was ſuppoſed that they would have been rechoſen as uſual, without oppoſition. But lord Sundon was very unpopular: he had been raiſed from a low condition to an Iriſh peerage, through the intereſt of his wife, who had been favourite bed-chamber woman to queen Caroline. The other candidate, Sir Charles Wager, was unexceptionable, both in his public

public and private character, but his attachment to the miniſter was a ſufficient objection. Chapter 58. 1741.

Some electors of Weſtminſter propoſed, very unexpectedly, admiral Vernon, then in the height of his popularity, and Mr. Edwin, a private gentleman of conſiderable fortune, whoſe wife, lady Charlotte, was lady of the bed chamber to the princeſs of Wales. The oppoſition at firſt deſpiſed, became formidable; and Sir Charles Wager being ſummoned to convoy the king to Holland, the management of the election was entruſted to ignorant veſtrymen and violent juſtices. The party in oppoſition to the court candidates, became very tumultuous. The majority of the electors were decidedly in favour of the miniſterial candidates, but lord Sundon was imprudently adviſed to cloſe the poll; to order a party of guards to attend; and while the military power ſurrounded the huſtings, the high bailiff returned him and Sir Charles Wager. This imprudent conduct highly exaſperated the populace; the guards were inſulted, Sundon was attacked, and narrowly eſcaped with life.

The example of the oppoſition at Weſtminſter, diffuſed a general ſpirit throughout the kingdom, and violent conteſts were excited in all quarters. Large ſums for ſupporting the expences were ſubſcribed by Pulteney, the ducheſs of Marlborough, and the prince of Wales, who contracted great debts on this memorable occaſion; and the managers of oppoſition employed this money with great advantage. Lord Falmouth gained over many

And other places.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. many of the Corniſh boroughs, which had uſually returned the members recommended by the crown: The duke of Argyle exerted himſelf with ſuch effect in Scotland, that he baffled all the efforts of his brother, the earl of Ilay, who had long managed the intereſt of the crown in that quarter; and the majority of Scottiſh members who had formed a ſtrong phalanx in favour of government, were now ranged on the contrary ſide. Theſe acquiſitions were conſidered by oppoſition as a ſure omen of ſucceſs; and Dodington, in a letter to the duke of Argyle, drew a comparative ſtatement of the two ſides, in the future parliament, highly unfavourable to the miniſterial party*. He juſtly obſerved, that a majority of ſixteen, which was the utmoſt that the moſt ſanguine friends of the miniſter could entertain hopes of forming at the commencement of the ſeſſion, would ſoon become a minority. He laid down a plan of conduct and attack, which was wiſely formed, and ably executed, the homogeneous parts were conſolidated, and the whole phalanx, however divided and diſcordant in other reſpects, moved on uniformly to one great object, the removal of the miniſter.

Clamours againſt the miniſter.

Many cauſes concurred, in the preſent criſis, to render the efforts of Walpole for ſecuring a ſufficient majority in the new parliament ineffectual. He had continued ſo long in full power, that many, like the ſubjects of the Pope during a long reign, pined for a new adminiſtration, from a mere deſire of change. Others formed dreams of future ſplendour

* Dodington to the duke of Argyle, June 18, 1741. Correſpondence.

dout and happineſs, which were to beam on the nation, when the miniſter was removed; that miniſter, who was ſtyled the father of corruption, who was accuſed of ſquandering the public money, and of drawing from the plunder of his devoted country, ſuch immenſe riches as no individual had ever before amaſſed; who alone prevented the ſuppreſſion of numerous taxes, the abolition of the national debt, and obſtructed thoſe plans of reform, which were to reſtore credit and dignity to the king and parliament. His fall was to produce a new æra, the revival of the golden age; a junction of all parties was to take place, and the ſovereign, inſtead of being the chief of a ſect, was to become at once the father of his people, and to reign in the hearts of his ſubjects. Theſe notions were induſtriouſly circulated, and greedily ſwallowed by the deluded populace, until his removal became an object of national concern. Chapter 58. 1741.

The popular clamour for a war with Spain had been ſo violent, that the reſiſtance of the miniſter was deemed a ſhameful puſillanimity and dereliction of national honour, and became the favourite theme of ſatire and contumely, both in proſe and rhyme. "Sir Robert Walpole," as Burke juſtly obſerves, "was forced into the war in 1739, by the people, who were inflamed to this meaſure, by the moſt leading politicians, by the firſt orators, and the greateſt poets of the times. For that war Pope ſung his dying notes. For that war Johnſon, in more energetic ſtrains, employed the voice of his early genius. For that war Glover diſtinguiſhed

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himſelf in the way in which his merit was the moſt natural and happy. The crowd readily followed the politicians, in the cry for a war which threatened little bloodſhed, and which promſed victories, that were attended with ſomething more ſolid than glory. A war with Spain was a war of plunder." *

Schiſm in the cabinet.

But even thoſe who acted with him laboured to undermine his power. Wilmington wiſhed his downfall, truſting that if that event ſhould take place, he ſhould ſucceed as firſt lord of the treaſury. He caballed with the principal leaders of oppoſition, and in a letter † to Dodington, congratulated him on his ſucceſs in the elections of Melcomb and Weymouth, againſt the candidates ſupported by the miniſter. Newcaſtle, who had hitherto acted an underpart, aſpired to be leader of the Whigs, and flattered himſelf that on the removal of Walpole, a canſiderable addition of power would be placed in his hands. He had even made clandeſtine overtures to the duke of Argyle, which had been diſcloſed to the miniſter. ‡

Coolneſs of the king.

The miniſter was alſo greatly embarraſſed with the conduct of foreign affairs, on which he was not always confidentially conſulted. The negotiation which ſettled the neutrality of Hanover, was begun and nearly concluded, not only without his approbation, but almoſt without his knowledge. § The firſt poſitive information he received of it, was a private

* Thoughts on a Regicide Peace.
† Correſpondence, May 16, 1741.
‡ Etough, from Sir Robert Walpole.
§ From the earl of Hardwicke.

private letter from the king, which was delivered to him in the preſence of the duke of Newcaſtle, to whom he never diſcloſed the contents.* He was apprehenſive leſt the nation ſhould impute to him a meaſure ſo extremely unpopular. He complained that lord Harrington, the ſecretary of ſtate who attended the king to Hanover, had not given earlier notice to the cabinet of England, and he told a foreign agent, † that the neutrality of Hanover was compulſory, and could not affect England. On mature reflection, however, he appreciated the neceſſity of the meaſure, and though diſſatisfied with the commencement of the negotiation, approved and ſanctioned its concluſion.

Chapter 58. 1741.

Every means was now employed to traduce his character. The moſt calumnious reports were invented and diffuſed. It was rumoured that admiral Haddock had orders to avoid meeting and intercepting the Spaniſh tranſports carrying troops to Italy, for the purpoſe of taking poſſeſſion of Tuſcany, Parma, and Placentia, for Don Philip, under the guaranty of England. Even ſuch wild and abſurd fictions, ‡ that he had betrayed to Fleury

Virulent calumnies.

* Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke. July 19, 1741. Hardwicke Papers.

† Zambini to baron Haſlang. Orford Papers.

‡ Theſe idle reports were repeated in an infamous pamphlet, intitled, "A Key to ſome late important Tranſactions, in ſeveral Letters from a certain Great Man, nobody knows where, wrote nobody knows when, and directed to nobody knows who," 1742. In the Memoirs of Madame Pompadour, is inſerted a pretended letter from Sir Robert Walpole, to cardinal Fleury, requeſting 3 millions of livres, to bribe the Engliſh parliament. "Je païe un ſubſide à la moitié du parlement pour le tenir dans les bornes pacifiques: mais comme le roi n'a pas aſſez d'argent, & que ceux à qui je n'en donne point ſe déclarent ouvertement

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Fleury and Patinho, the projected operations againſt Spain, and that he received from thoſe miniſters large remittances to bribe the parliament, were audaciouſly advanced, and confidently believed.

The miniſter had been no ſooner forced into the war, than the mode of conducting it became an object of obloquy and cenſure. Violent murmurs were diffuſed throughout the nation, grounded on the ill ſucceſs of the war, the loſs of the commerce with Spain, of which thoſe who forced the miniſter to commence hoſtilities moſt loudly complained; the neutrality of Hanover was repreſented as inconſiſtent with the dignity and intereſts of England, and falſely imputed to him. To theſe immediate cauſes of complaint were added apprehenſions of future evils; the concluſion of a diſhonourable

vertement pour la guerre, il conviendroit que vôtre eminence me fît paſſer trois-millions-tournois, pour diminuer la voix de ceux que crient le plus fort. L'or eſt un métail ici qui adoucit le ſang trop belliqueux. Il n'y a point de guerrier fougueux dans le parlement, qu'une penſion de deux-mille livres ne rende très pacifique. Ni plus ni moins, ſi l'Angleterre ſe déclare, il vous faudra paier des ſubſides aux puiſſances pour faire la ballance, ſans compter que les ſuccès de la guerre peuvent être incertains; au lieu qu'en m'envoïant de l'argent, vous achetez la paix de la premiere main, &c. &c." Memoires de Pompadour, tom. 1. p. 58. I ſhall employ no time in diſcuſſing this letter, the numerous falſities and abſurdities of which exhibit the ſtrongeſt internal evidence that it is a forgery. It would not have been worth while to notice ſuch a letter, inſerted in a ſpurious publication, had it not been quoted as authentic, by the anonymous biographer of the earl of Chatham, with a malicious intention (v. 1. p. 122.) and had not the ingenious author of "Anecdotes of diſtinguiſhed Perſons," recently given his ſanction to this unfounded rumour. "The cardinal, like our excellent miniſter Sir Robert Walpole, was forced into an expenſive and ruinous war by the clamour of faction, and the folly of the people. On the cardinal's part, indeed, he had taken the moſt effectual method of keeping the two great nations of France and England in perfect harmony with one another: *He uſed to remit to Sir Robert a certain ſum of money occaſionally, to be diſtributed amongſt thoſe who, from diſappointment and a love of revenge, were likely in this country to counteract his pacific intentions.*" Vol. 4. p. 239.

able peace with Spain was ſaid to be in agitation, of which the baſis was to be the reſtitution of Gibraltar and Minorca; the aggrandiſement of France, the abaſement of the houſe of Auſtria, the eſtabliſhment of the elector of Bavaria on the throne of the Empire, who would always remain attached to the houſe of Bourbon, and the guaranty of Parma to Don Philip, which would be a ſhameful breach of the guaranty of the pragmatic ſanction.

Supineneſs of the miniſter.

The majority by which the motion to remove him was rejected, the death of Sir William Wyndham, and the retreat of Bolingbroke into France, rendered him indolent, and inſpired him with too much confidence in the ſupport of the king, and in the ſtrength of his friends. "His ſucceſs on this occaſion," as a contemporary pamphleteer juſtly expreſſes himſelf, "threw him into a lethargy of power. He imagined that the breach between the Whigs and the Tories was too great to be repaired during the time of electing a new parliament; he thought that it would daily become wider; he ſeems to have miſtaken the motives which induced the Tories to act as they did, and formed too favourable a judgment of the temper and ſpirit manifeſted by the people on that unjuſt motion. He gave them time to reconcile this temporary ebb, and ſuffered the popular opinion againſt him to flow back again with increaſing violence." *

While

* A View of the whole Conduct of a late Eminent Patriot, p. 148.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. Activity of oppoſition.

While the miniſter laboured under this preſſure of great unpopularity; while he was arraigned for the meaſures of others, of which he was accuſed of being the ſole director; while the cabinet was divided, and the ſupport from the crown ſo feeble; the exertions on the ſide of government were inadequate to the vigorous efforts made by oppoſition. The Tories and Jacobites were reconciled with the diſaffected Whigs, and all united to demoliſh their common enemy. Letters from the Pretender * were circulated among the Jacobites and high Tories, exhorting them to uſe all their efforts for the purpoſe of effecting the diſgrace of Sir Robert Walpole; and ſuch was the temper of the people, that his fall became the open or ſecret wiſh of all parties.

* From lord Orford.—Etough alſo, in a letter to Horace Walpole, ſays, "The Pretender, as this your great brother poſitively aſſured me, to his certain knowledge, ſent at leaſt an hundred letters, which were tranſmitted to his friends, in November 1741. The purport of them was to engage them to uſe all poſſible endeavours, in order to compaſs Walpole's demolition." Walpole Papers.

CHAPTER THE FIFTY-NINTH:

1741—1742.

Meeting of Parliament.—Complexion of the new Houſe of Commons.—King's Speech.—Walpole permits an Alteration to be made in the Addreſs.—Small Majority in Favour of the Boſſiney Election.—The Appointment of a Chairman of the Committee of Election carried againſt him.—Loſes the Queſtion of the Weſtminſter Election.—Adjournment of the Houſe.—Ineffectual Attempt to detach the Prince of Wales from the Oppoſition.—Houſe again aſſembles.—Walpole loſes the Chippenham Election.—Adjournment of the Houſe of Commons, at the King's Requeſt.—Sir Robert Walpole created Earl of Orford, and reſigns.—Affecting interview with the King.—Regret of his Friends.

Meeting of the new parliament.

THE new parliament aſſembled on the 4th of December; when Arthur Onſlow was re-choſen ſpeaker. On the 8th, the king made a ſpeech from the throne. He ſaid:

King's ſpeech.

"It is always a great ſatisfaction to me to meet you aſſembled in parliament; and eſpecially at this time, when the poſture of affairs makes your counſel and aſſiſtance ſo neceſſary; and when by means of the new elections, I may have an opportunity of knowing the more immediate ſenſe and diſpoſition of my people in general, from their repreſentatives choſen, during a ſeaſon, which has been attended with a great variety of incidents of the greateſt conſequence and expectation, and during the courſe of the war, in which we are engaged with the crown of Spain; a war, in itſelf, juſt and neceſſary, entered into by the repeated advice of both houſes of parliament, and particularly

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. larly recommended to me to be carried on in America, which has been my principal care. I can therefore make no doubt, but that you are met together, fully ſenſible of our preſent ſituation, and prepared to give me ſuch advice, as ſhall be moſt conducive to the honour and true intereſt of my crown and kingdoms."

He next mentioned the powerful confederacy formed againſt the queen of Hungary, &c. "Had other powers," he ſaid, "that were under the like engagements with me, anſwered the juſt expectations they had ſo ſolemnly given, the ſupport of the common cauſe had been attended with leſs difficulty. I have, purſuant to the advice of my parliament, ever ſince the death of the late Emperor, exerted myſelf in ſupport of the houſe of Auſtria. I have endeavoured, by the moſt proper and early applications, to induce other powers that were equally engaged with me, and united by common intereſt, to concert ſuch meaſures as ſo important and critical a conjuncture required; and where an accommodation ſeemed to me to be neceſſary, I laboured to reconcile thoſe princes, whoſe union would have been the moſt effectual means to prevent the miſchiefs that have happened, and the beſt ſecurity for the ſafety and intereſt of the whole. Although my endeavours have not hitherto had the deſired effect, I cannot but ſtill hope, that a juſt ſenſe of the common and approaching danger will produce a more favourable turn in the counſels of other nations." He then exhorted parliament to put the nation in a condi-

tion of aſſiſting its friends, defeating its enemies in any attempts they might make againſt him or his dominions, and concluded with an exhortation, that they would act with unanimity, vigour, and diſpatch.* Chapter 59. 1741 to 1742.

The remarkable caution with which the king had always mentioned any thing relating to his allies, made this ſpeech the more noticed, and it was generally ſuppoſed not to have been dictated by the miniſter,† a circumſtance which ſeemed to demonſtrate, that there was a preponderating party againſt him in the cabinet.

Proceedings.

It ſoon appeared from the complexion of the houſe, and the conduct of the miniſter, that his power and influence were on the decline. An addreſs of thanks being propoſed by Henry Herbert, ſome of the oppoſition objected to a clauſe, "for returning his majeſty the thanks of this houſe, for his royal care in proſecuting the war with Spain."‡ Sir Robert Walpole now felt, for the firſt time, the awkwardneſs of his ſituation, and he appeared "ſhorn of his ſtrength." Inſtead of oppoſing with ſpirit any alteration in the addreſs, and manfully declaring that the misfortunes of the war could not be charged upon government, he attempted to palliate the loſſes which the nation had ſuffered, and to ſhew that the war had not been ſo unſucceſsful as it was repreſented, and weakly agreed, for the ſake of unanimity, to omit the paragraph relating to the Spaniſh war. ‡ Pulteney availed

* Journals.—Chandler. † Tindal, vol. 20. p. 525.
‡ Tindal, vol. 20, p. 526.—Chandler.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742. availed himſelf of this conceſſion; and attributed it to fear and conſcious guilt. He made a long and animated ſpeech, full of perſonal invectives; and anticipated the triumph of his party, by an alluſion to the balance of power. He ſaid, that not being in the ſecrets of government, he was ignorant of its ſtate abroad, but congratulated the houſe that he had not for many years known it to be ſo near an equilibrium there as it was then *. He then recapitulated the principal charges which had been urged againſt Sir Robert Walpole from the beginning of his adminiſtration; dwelt very particularly on the miſmanagement of the war with Spain, and even carried his reproach ſo far as to accuſe him of being influenced by the enemies of the proteſtant eſtabliſhment.

Walpole repelled this intemperate attack with unuſual feebleneſs; and after a ſhort but general juſtification of the meaſures of government, concluded with ſaying, "I am very far from hoping or deſiring that the houſe ſhould be ſatisfied with a defence like this; I know, by obſerving the practice of the opponents of the miniſtry, what fallacies may be concealed in general aſſertions; and am ſo far from wiſhing to evade a more ſtrict inquiry, that if the gentleman who has thus publicly and confidentially accuſed the miniſtry, will name a day for inquiring into the ſtate of the nation, I will ſecond his motion." †

This

* Orlebar to Etough, December 10, 1741. Correſpondence.

† Chandler. vol. 13, p. 47.

This challenge was accepted; the addreſs, without any mention of the Spaniſh war, was voted; the motion made by Pulteney to fix a day for conſidering the ſtate of the nation, was ſeconded by Walpole, and the 21ſt of January was appointed for that purpoſe. Addreſs amended.

The coolneſs of the addreſs, and the omiſſion of the clauſe relating to the war, eſſentially hurt the miniſter. It led his intereſted followers to ſuſpect, that his power was declining; while his friends, who were ſteady in their attachment to the houſe of Brunſwick, were of opinion, that ſtronger aſſurances were due to the king, for the dangers to which he expoſed his electoral dominions, the French having already violated the ſtipulated neutrality, and threatened to take up their winter quarters in Hanover.*

Proceedings on elections.

The great points on which the two parties exerted their reſpective ſtrength, were the deciſions on conteſted elections. Ever ſince the Ayleſbury conteſt, when the houſe of commons aſſumed to itſelf the power of judging finally on the qualifications of the electors, which had been ſo warmly oppoſed by Walpole, in the commencement of his parliamentary career, the deciſion on elections became a mere party buſineſs. The merits of the caſe were ſeldom conſidered, and the queſtions were almoſt wholly carried by perſonal or political intereſts. At the opening of this parliament, there were more conteſted elections than uſual; and as the power of the two contending parties ultimately depended on the

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 527.

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the deciſion, every nerve was ſtrained by both ſides in favour of their reſpective friends. The miniſter had been heard to declare, that there ſhould be no quarter given in elections, and his friends truſted that the deciſions would chiefly be in his favour. But theſe ſanguine hopes were fruſtrated by the activity of oppoſition, the lukewarmneſs of many of his real friends, and treachery of his pretended partiſans. The oppoſition made it a principal object to attend on theſe occaſions, and it was eſteemed infamous to deſert a committee of election.* On the other hand, many of thoſe who ſupported government often ſtaid away, and not unfrequently voted againſt the candidates countenanced by the miniſter.

The firſt diviſion which took place was on the Boſſiney election, and the party favoured by the miniſter carried it only by 222 againſt 216. With this ſmall majority, Walpole acted as he had done in former parliaments. He did not ſufficiently adapt himſelf to the change of circumſtances, or conſult the temper of the houſe in the queſtion which was next moved, for chooſing a chairman of the committee of elections. This was a point of great conſequence, becauſe he poſſeſſed conſiderable power in influencing the deciſions referred to the committee. Walpole acted with much imprudence in propoſing Giles Earle, one of the lords of the treaſury, who had been chairman during the two laſt parliaments, and was exceedingly unpopular. The oppoſition ſupported Dr. Lee, who was much more beloved

* Dodington to the duke of Argyle, June 18, 1741. Correſpondence.

beloved and reſpected by all parties than his antagoniſt. The queſtion was accordingly carried, from perſonal conſiderations, againſt the miniſterial candidate, by a majority of 242 againſt 238. The loſs of this queſtion gave a mortal blow to his intereſt, and redoubled the ſpirit of his adverſaries. The fatal conſequences were immediately viſible; ſeveral unſucceſsful candidates, who had depended on his ſupport, withdrew their petitions. Chapter 59. 1741 to 1742.

But the fate of the miniſter was almoſt decided by the determination on the Weſtminſter election, which was one of the points he moſt wiſhed to carry, and in which he had flattered himſelf with the moſt ſanguine hopes. On the petition of the two rejected members, complaining of an undue election and return, the queſtion was carried againſt the ſitting members by a majority of four, and the election was declared void. A motion for adjournment was negatived, and the returning officer was ordered to be taken into cuſtody, by a majority of 217 againſt 215. A ſecond motion to adjourn was alſo loſt, and it was unanimouſly reſolved, that the preſence of armed ſoldiers, at an election of members of parliament, was a high infringement of the liberties of the ſubject, a manifeſt violation of the freedom of election, and an open defiance of the laws and conſtitution. Deciſion of the Weſtminſter election. December 22.

On the 24th, the houſe adjourned to the 18th of January; and that ſhort interval was employed by the miniſter in attempts to increaſe his friends, and to maintain himſelf in power; but all his efforts were ineffectual. Receſs.

The

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The ſtate of his own health was a principal cauſe of his downfal. He had ſuffered at the latter end of the preceding year from a ſevere illneſs.* His memory was no longer ſo ſtrong, nor his method of tranſacting buſineſs ſo ready as before. Hence he was incapable of making thoſe exertions which his critical ſituation rendered neceſſary; of unmaſking his treacherous friends; of expoſing his enemies, and of adopting ſuch meaſures as would have enabled him to act with vigour, or to retire with dignity. During this ſeſſion he appeared in general abſent and thoughtful. He ſeemed to have loſt, in many inſtances, that contempt of abuſe, and command of temper, for which he had been remarkably diſtinguiſhed: he was either, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, ſilent, or he was irritable and fretful. In one inſtance he publicly declared, that if he could collect the real ſenſe of the houſe on the difficult and dangerous ſituation of affairs, he would ſupport it as a miniſter in the cabinet. But when he made this declaration, he did not intimate his own opinion; a circumſtance which, according to the late earl of Hardwicke, who was preſent on this occaſion, proved the diſtreſs and concern under which he laboured.† The loſs of the Weſtminſter queſtion ought to have been the ſignal of his immediate reſignation, and many of his friends were of that opinion. But he ſtill appeared anxious to retain his power as long as he was able; and during the receſs of parliament, he made an ill-judged application to ſeduce the prince of Wales from his party,

Application to the prince of Wales.

8

* From lord Orford.

† From the late earl of Hardwicke.

party, in which his own ſagacity and knowledge of mankind ought to have convinced him, that he had no chance of ſucceeding. Being informed that the members of oppoſition propoſed to renew the motion in parliament, for increaſing the eſtabliſhment of the prince, he prevailed on the king, not without the greateſt difficulty, to offer an increaſe of £. 50,000 to his annual income, and to inſinuate hopes that his debts ſhould be paid, provided he would not oppoſe the meaſures of government. A meſſage to this purpoſe was conveyed to the prince by the biſhop of Oxford*, at the inſtance of lord Cholmondeley, and by command of the king. The prince, after due expreſſions of duty and affection, declared that he conſidered the meſſage as coming from lord Cholmondeley, and not from the king, and therefore would not liſten to any propoſition of a ſimilar import, ſo long as Sir Robert Walpole continued at the head of adminiſtration. †

Chapter 59. 1741 to 1742.

The

* Secker, afterwards archbiſhop of Canterbury.

† As many erroneous narratives of this tranſaction have been given to the public, I ſhall ſubjoin an account, which I found among the Walpole papers, in the hand-writing of Sir Robert Walpole, and bearing the following endorſement; "An account of what paſſed between H. R. H. and lord Oxford, January 5, 1744, with the printed letter that paſſed between the king and prince upon the breach."

"An account of what the biſhop of Oxford ſaid to the prince of Wales, from lord Cholmondeley, authorized by his majeſty, January 5, 1744.

"That if his royal highneſs would write a dutiful letter to his majeſty, expreſſing his concern for what was paſſed, in ſuch a manner as might be conſiſtent with his majeſty's honour to accept, repreſenting the uneaſy circumſtances of his fortune, and referring them to his majeſty's goodneſs, lord Cholmondeley had full and ſufficient ground, from his knowledge of his majeſty's intentions and diſpoſitions, to aſſure his royal highneſs that his majeſty would be reconciled to him; and

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The reſignation of Sir Robert Walpole was now conſidered as certain, both by his friends and enemies; but he had ſtill more mortifications to experience before his fate was ultimately decided.

Meeting after the recеſs.

On the 18th of January the parliament again aſſembled; and on the 19th the queſtion on the Berwick election was carried, without a diviſion, in favour of Alexander Hugh Campbell, againſt the candidate who was ſupported by the court. On the 20th, a bill, brought in by Sir John Ruſhout and Sir John Hynde Cotton, for taking, examining, and ſtating the public accounts, paſſed without oppoſition. On the 21ſt, Pulteney made the celebrated motion for referring to a ſecret committee the papers relating to the war, which had been already preſented to the houſe. As this motion involved in it numerous charges againſt the conduct of the war, ſtated the neceſſity of a parliamentary inquiry, and brought on perſonal invectives,

and would add 50,000 a year to his preſent income, and would not require any terms from him, in relation to any of thoſe perſons who were in his royal highneſs's ſervice, counſels, or confidence, nor retain any reſentment or diſpleaſure againſt him.

"To this lord Cholmondeley added, that there was no doubt but that his royal highneſs's debts would in this caſe be provided for, in ſuch a manner as upon farther conſideration ſhould be found moſt proper and practicable.

"The anſwer of his royal highneſs, January 5, 174½. "His royal highneſs uſed ſtrong expreſſions of duty and affection to his majeſty, and anſwered further to this purpoſe: That if this had been a meſſage directly from his majeſty, it would have been his duty to have written a letter to H. M. on the occaſion; but as it was a propoſition that came from lord Cholmondeley, in the manner I had mentioned; his anſwer to lord Cholmondeley was, that he would not hearken to it, ſo long as Sir Robert Walpole was in power, by whom he conceived himſelf to have been greatly injured, and to whom he thought the moſt prudent advice for Sir Robert Walpole himſelf, and the public, was, that he ſhould retire; and that he, the prince, had before this received intimations of the ſame nature with thoſe I had now ſaid to him, and deſired not to have any more, whilſt Sir Robert continued in power."

tives againſt the miniſter, Sir Robert Walpole took a conſiderable ſhare in the debate, and was rouſed to the moſt animated exertions. In this laſt effort, he is ſaid by his friends to have exceeded himſelf, and evinced ſuch a conſummate knowledge of foreign affairs as aſtoniſhed the houſe. He was alſo ably defended by Pelham, Winnington, and Sir William Yonge; the queſtion, however, would have been carried but for the influence of lord Hartington, who brought over two Tory members, and by this means, to uſe the expreſſions * of Sir Robert Wilmot, ſaved the country from twenty-four tyrants! The motion was negatived by a majority of only three, in the fulleſt houſe known for many years, for 503 members voted. Chapter 59. 1741 to 1742.

On this queſtion every exertion was made by oppoſition, and every art uſed to ſecure a majority. The purport of the intended motion was not previouſly known. The miniſter was taken unawares; many of his friends had retired; many abſented themſelves by deſign; others, who were ſent for in the courſe of the debate, declined, under various pretences, making their appearance, while all his opponents remained at their poſts. The efforts were ſo great on both ſides, that members were brought in from the chamber of ſickneſs. Several voted in that condition on the ſide of oppoſition; but ſome who intended to have ſupported the miniſter were prevented from appearing at the diviſion. They had been placed in an adjoining apartment

* Sir Robert Wilmot to the duke of Devonſhire, January 23, 174½, Correſpondence.

Period VII. 1727 to 1742. ment belonging to lord Walpole, as auditor of the exchequer, which communicated with the houſe. The adverſaries, aware of this fact, filled the key-hole of the door with dirt and ſand, which prevented their admiſſion into the houſe till the diviſion was over.* On this occaſion, as general Churchill was ſitting next to the prince of Wales, who was in the houſe of commons to hear the debates, a member was brought in who had loſt the uſe of his limbs. "So," ſays the prince, "I ſee you bring in the lame, the halt, and the blind, "Yes," replied the general, "the lame on our ſide, and the blind on your's." † The ſmall majority in favour of government, notwithſtanding all the exertions made by the miniſter, was ſo ſure a ſignal of his defeat, that a motion to addreſs the king for copies of the memorials and letters, and other papers ſent to and from the king of Pruſſia, which had been rejected on the 18th of December, by a majority of 24, now paſſed without a diviſion.

Loſs of the Chippenham queſtion.

At length, on the 28th, the oppoſition finally triumphed. A queſtion on the Chippenham election was carried againſt the miniſter, by a majority of one, 237 againſt 236, and the party gained ſo conſiderable an acceſſion, by the deſertion or abſence of ſeveral members of the court party, that the final deciſion of the Chippenham election was

Feb. 2. carried againſt the miniſter by a majority of 16, 241 againſt 225. Walpole ſeemed to have anticipated this event, and met it with his uſual fortitude

* Sir Robert Wilmot's letters. Correſpondence.

† From lord Orford.

tude and cheerfulneſs. While the tellers were performing their office, he beckoned Sir Edward Bayntun, the member whoſe return was ſupported by oppoſition, to ſit near him, ſpoke to him with great complacency, animadverted on the ingratitude of ſeveral individuals who were voting againſt him, on whom he had conferred great favours, and declared he ſhould never again ſit in that houſe *.

On the 3d of February the houſe adjourned at the king's command, ſignified by the chancellor, to the 18th.

On the 9th Sir Robert Walpole was created earl of Orford, and on the 11th he reſigned.

Created earl of Orford.

It is aſſerted by a contemporary hiſtorian†, who poſſeſſed great means of information, that the miniſter would have ſooner retired, if the ſtate of the nation and of parties had not rendered his continuance in power neceſſary for the arrangement of a new adminiſtration, and for preſerving the tranquillity of the country; and that he continued in office ſolely in compliance with the wiſhes of his friends. The papers which have been committed to my inſpection, and the undoubted information which I have received, enable me to contradict this aſſertion. He retired unwillingly and ſlowly: no ſhipwrecked pilot ever clung to the rudder of a ſinking veſſel with greater pertinacity than he did to the helm of ſtate; he did not relinquiſh his poſt until he was driven from it by the deſertion of his followers

Reſigns reluctantly.

* From Sir Edward Bayntun.

† Tindal.

Period VII. 1737 to 1742.

followers and the clamours of the public. Speaker Onſlow, who knew him well, declared that he reluctantly quitted his ſtation; * and if any doubt ſtill remains, we have the teſtimony of the miniſter himſelf. "I muſt inform you," he obſerves in a letter to the duke of Devonſhire, "that the panic was ſo great among—what ſhall I call them?—my own friends, that *they all* declared that my retiring was become abſolutely neceſſary, as the only means to carry on the public buſineſs with honour and ſucceſs." †

It has been alſo aſſerted with no leſs confidence, that the king himſelf was become weary of a miniſter, who had ſo long directed his affairs, who had ſo often oppoſed and obſtructed his inclination for war, and who was ſtill endeavouring to remove every obſtacle which impeded the return of peace. But the ſame documents enable me to adduce an honourable teſtimony of the good faith and firmneſs of George the Second. Although the aſperities which time and vexation occaſioned in both their tempers, produced a momentary diſſatisfaction, yet the king had contracted, by long habit and experience of his capacity for buſineſs, a high regard and eſteem for his long-tried counſellor. In vain the earl of Wilmington and the duke of Dorſet had enforced the neceſſity of his removal, the reſolution of the king was unſhaken, and

* Onſlow's Remarks. Correſpondence, Period IV.

† Sir Robert Walpole to the duke of Devonſhire, February 2, 1741-2. Correſpondence.

and he did not consent to his resignation until the minister himself made it his express desire. * Chapter 59. 1741 to 1742.

The interview when he took leave of the king was highly affecting. On kneeling down to kiss his hand, the king burst into tears, the ex-minister was so moved with that instance of regard, that he continued for some time in that posture; and the king was so touched, that he was unable to raise him from the ground. When he at length rose, the king testified his regret for the loss of so faithful a counsellor, expressed his gratitude for his long services, and his hopes of receiving advice on important occasions. † Affecting interview with the king.

When his resolution to resign was known, he received more honours than had been paid to him in the plenitude of power. His last levee was more numerously attended than his first. The concourse of persons of all ranks and distinctions was prodigious; and their expressions of affectionate regard and concern extremely moving. Affection and regret of his friends.

The ex-minister received many proofs of disinterested attachment from persons to whom he had never shewn any mark of particular attention. Among others, Soame Jenyns gave a testimony of his approbation, thus recorded in the words of his biographer. "Unknown to Sir Robert, and unconnected with him by acquaintance or private regard, he supported him to the utmost of his power, till he retired from his high station, making room Anecdote of Soame Jenyns.

* Lord Hartington to the duke of Devonshire, February 4, 1741-2. Correspondence.

† Lord Hartington to the duke of Devonshire. Correspondence.

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room for thoſe who ſoon ſhewed the loſs the nation had ſuſtained by the ſad exchange. After he had retired, Soame Jenyns waited upon Sir Robert at Chelſea, when, amongſt other things which paſſed in converſation, lord Orford acknowledged the ſupport he had given him, during the time that he had ſitten in parliament, and in expreſſions of great thankfulneſs; at the ſame time declaring, that had thoſe to whom, during his meridian of power, he had ſhewn the greateſt friendſhip, and loaded with all the favours he could confer on them, but borne as kind diſpoſitions to him as he had done, who had not been diſtinguiſhed by any particular regard, he would not then have paid a viſit to an ex-miniſter." *

The old clergyman of Walſingham, who was maſter of the firſt ſchool in which Sir Robert Walpole was inſtructed, came to Houghton, and told him that he had been his firſt maſter, and had predicted that he would be a great man. Being aſked why he never had called on him while he was in power, he anſwered, "I knew that you were ſurrounded with ſo many petitioners craving preferment, and that you had done ſo much for Norfolk people, that I did not wiſh to intrude." "But," he added in a ſtrain of good-natured ſimplicity, "I always inquired how Robin went on, and was ſatisfied with your proceedings." †

* Life of Soame Jenyns, p. 37.

† From Lord Orford.

PERIOD THE EIGHTH:

From the Reſignation of Sir ROBERT WALPOLE to his Death.

1742—1745.

CHAPTER THE SIXTIETH:

1742.

Exertions and Influence of Walpole.—Negotiations with Pulteney for the Arrangement of a new Adminiſtration.—Jealouſies and Diviſions of Oppoſition.—Meeting at the Fountain Tavern.—Interference of the Prince of Wales.—Parliamentary Inquiry into the Conduct of the Ex-miniſter.—Secret Committee.—Indemnity Bill.—Paſſes the Commons.—Rejected by the Lords.—Pulteney created Earl of Bath.—His Unpopularity.—Accuſations againſt him.—Examined and refuted.

THE miniſter, in retiring, had three great objects in view. 1ſt. To diſunite the heterogeneous parties which compoſed the oppoſition. 2d. To form an adminiſtration on the Whig baſis. 3d. To ſave himſelf from a public proſecution. Views of Walpole.

If the firſt point was effected, the others would neceſſarily follow. To divide the oppoſition, and weaken a combination which would elſe have been fatal to him, it became neceſſary to lure the duke of Argyle and the Tories, to conciliate the prince of Wales, and to detach Pulteney, who then headed the Whigs in oppoſition, from the Tories. To divide his opponents.

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effect theſe views, he had recourſe to the grand engine of political jealouſy. He made ſuch advances to the Tories as inſpired them with fallacious hopes and unfounded notions of their own importance, * and filled the Whigs in oppoſition with apprehenſions of being excluded from the ſpoils. Having ſucceeded in this attempt, he adviſed the king to form a Whig adminiſtration, and ſuggeſted the propriety of applying to Pulteney. One of the greateſt difficulties under which he laboured in the courſe of this political tranſaction, was to conquer the king's repugnance to Pulteney, which at this period ſeemed almoſt inſuperable, and to perſuade his majeſty to commence the negotiation, and acquieſce in Pulteney's expected demand of a peerage. Having at length overcome the king's pertinacious inveteracy, he ſaid to his ſon Horace, "I have ſet the king upon him," and at another time, in the farther progreſs of the king's compliance, he triumphantly ſaid, making at the ſame time a motion with his hand as if he was locking a door, "I have turned the key of the cloſet upon him." †

Negotiation with Pulteney.

When the negotiation with Pulteney firſt commenced, neither the documents in my poſſeſſion, or any oral information, have enabled me to aſcertain; but it is probable that indirect overtures had been made ſome time before the receſs.

Hints

* See Defence of the People, p. 81.—This pamphlet was written by Ralph, who received his information from Dodington, then in union with the duke of Argyle.

† From lord Orford.

Hints had been thrown out to Carteret, from ſome perſon in the king's confidence, that propoſals would be made to Pulteney, as the leader of the houſe of commons; but a fortnight elapſed after this communication had been made, before any ſtep was taken. At length a meſſage came from the duke of Newcaſtle, requeſting Pulteney to meet him privately at his ſecretary, Mr. Stone's, houſe at Whitehall. Pulteney returned for anſwer, that in the preſent juncture he could not comply with this requeſt without giving umbrage to his friends. He was under the neceſſity of declining a private meeting, but added, that he had no objection to receive his grace publicly at his own houſe. A few days afterwards he received a note from the duke of Newcaſtle, importing, that he and the lord chancellor, having a meſſage from the king, would wait upon him.

First conference with Newcaſtle.

The meeting took place in the forenoon, between the duke of Newcaſtle and the chancellor on one ſide, and Pulteney and Carteret, whoſe preſence he had deſired as his confidential friend, on the other.

Newcaſtle opened the conference by ſaying; that the king being convinced that Sir Robert Walpole was no longer ſupported by a majority in the houſe of commons, had commanded them to offer the places which that miniſter poſſeſſed to Mr. Pulteney, with the power of forming his own adminiſtration, on the ſole condition that Sir Robert Walpole ſhould not be proſecuted. To this propoſal Pulteney replied, that if that condition

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was to be made the foundation of the treaty, he never would comply with it; "and even," he concluded, "ſhould my inclination induce me to accede to theſe terms, yet it might not be in my power to fulfil my engagement; the heads of parties being like the heads of ſnakes, which are carried on by their tails. For my part, he added, I will be no ſcreen; but if the king ſhould be pleaſed to expreſs a deſire to open any treaty, or to hold any converſation with me, I will pay my duty at St. James's, though I have not been at court for many years; but I will not come privately, but publicly and at noon day, in order to prevent all jealouſy and ſuſpicion." * Before they parted, ſome negus was brought in, and the duke of Newcaſtle drank, "Here is to our happier meeting." Pulteney replied, in a quotation from Shakeſpear's Julius Cæſar,

"If we do meet again, why we ſhall ſmile,
"If not, why then this meeting was well made."

Expectations of the Tories.

Meanwhile a prodigious ferment appeared throughout the nation. The Tories and Jacobites were equally irritated againſt the miniſter, and the popular clamours for reform, were no leſs violent than diſcordant. A contemporary author has well deſcribed the vehement and contradictory views of the heterogeneous parties which compoſed the oppoſition. "Among thoſe who thought themſelves the moſt moderate, no two men agreed upon what was neceſſary. Some thinking that all ſecurity lay in a good place bill, about the degree and extent

* Biſhop Newton.

tent of which they likewiſe differed. Some in a penſion bill, which others more juſtly thought would ſignify nothing. Some in a law for triennal parliaments, which all who did not delight in riot or in the proſpect of corruption, thought both dangerous and dubious. Some for annual parliaments, which others thought too frequent. Some for juſtice on the miniſter. Others not for ſanguinary views. Some for a reduction of the civil liſt, which others thought unjuſt to be taken away, having been legally given. Some for the ſale of all employments. Others for allowing a few. Some for taking the diſpoſition of them from the crown, which others thought anti-conſtitutional. Some for allowing them to ſubſiſt, but to be given only to thoſe who were not in parliament, that is, among themſelves. Some to allow them to be given for life. Some for making the army independent. Others for no regular troops at all." * Chapter 60. 1742.

To oppoſe this torrent of reform, the neceſſity of gaining Pulteney became more and more urgent. Though it ſhould be admitted that perſonal pique and party reſentment were among the motives which influenced his oppoſition, yet he was known to be a friend to the conſtitution, a ſound Whig, and a warm partiſan to the proteſtant eſtabliſhment, and the largeneſs of his property would induce him to obſtruct all meaſures which might tend to create confuſion, or perplex government.

The

* Faction detected, p. 69.

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The only method to conciliate him was, in appearance, to ſubmit entirely to his demands, to prevail on him to make as few changes as poſſible, to introduce few obnoxious perſons, and to truſt the ſafety of Walpole to future exigencies.

Walpole's influence.

This ſcheme was managed with ſo much addreſs, that Pulteney, in forming an adminiſtration, the great outlines of which were traced by Walpole, conceived that he was dictating his own terms. It was particularly owing to his influence that Newcaſtle retained his ſituation of ſecretary of ſtate, and that Harrington, who was compelled to make way for Carteret, obtained the preſidentſhip of the council; many of his moſt confidential friends were alſo continued in their poſts.

Soon after the firſt conference with Newcaſtle, the king ſent Pulteney a private meſſage, requeſting that if he did not chuſe to place himſelf at the head of the treaſury, he would let lord Wilmington *ſlide* into it, in which Pulteney acquieſced. Carteret, who coveted that poſt, expreſſing diſſatisfaction at the arrangement, Pulteney declared that he would break his own reſolution, and take the place himſelf, if Carteret would not conſent to the appointment of Wilmington. "You," he added, "muſt be ſecretary of ſtate, as the fitteſt perſon to direct foreign affairs." *

Pulteney's ſecond conference.

In the courſe of a few days another conference was held at the ſame place, by the ſame perſons. Newcaſtle ſaid, that he was now commiſſioned by the king to make the former offers, without inſiſting

* From the biſhop of Saliſbury.

ing on the condition of not profecuting the miniſter; and he added, that the king only requeſted that, if any proſecution was commenced againſt Sir Robert Walpole, he would not inflame it, though he might not chuſe to oppoſe it. Pulteney replied, that he was not *a man of blood*; that in all his expreſſions importing a reſolution to purſue the miniſter to deſtruction, he meant only the deſtruction of his power, but not of his perſon. He could not undertake to ſay what was proper to be done; he muſt take the advice of his friends; though he was free to own, that according to his opinion ſome parliamentary cenſure at leaſt ought to be inflicted for ſo many years of mal-adminiſtration. Newcaſtle * then obſerved, "the king truſts you will not diſtreſs the government by making too many changes in the midſt of a ſeſſion of parliament, and that you and your friends will be ſatisfied with the removal of Sir Robert Walpole and a few others." Pulteney replied, that he was far from deſiring to perplex government, or to make too many changes at once, which would throw all things into confuſion, he did not inſiſt on a total change; and he had no objection to the duke of Newcaſtle or the lord chancellor, but what he inſiſted upon, he added, was an alteration of meaſures as well as men: He only required that ſome obnoxious perſons ſhould be diſmiſſed; that the main forts of government ſhould be delivered into the hands of his party; a majority in the cabinet council, the nomination of a ſecretary of ſtate for Scotland,

* Biſhop Newton.

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Scotland, and of the boards of treaſury and admiralty. After ſome reſiſtance, theſe points being finally agreed to, Newcaſtle ſuppoſed that in arranging the new adminiſtration, he would place himſelf at the head of the treaſury, and declared that it was the earneſt and repeated deſire of the king. "As the diſpoſition of places is in my hands," replied Pulteney, "I will accept none myſelf; I have ſo repeatedly declared my reſolution on that head, and I will not now contradict myſelf:" He then named the earl of Wilmington firſt lord of the treaſury; Sandys chancellor of the exchequer; Carteret ſecretary of ſtate; Sir John Ruſhout, Gibbon, and Waller, lords of the treaſury; a new board of admiralty, including Sir John Hynde Cotton; and the marquis of Tweedale ſecretary of ſtate for Scotland. For himſelf he demanded only a peerage, and a ſeat in the cabinet. Before they parted, Pulteney declared that he was under ſuch engagements with the duke of Argyle, that he muſt acquaint him with all which had paſſed; and added, that he ſhould not oblige him to ſecrecy, but leave him at liberty to inform lord Cheſterfield or lord Cobham, or any of his friends. Newcaſtle did not conſent to this without unwillingneſs, and the meeting ended.*

Jealouſies.

Theſe negotiations created great jealouſies, and excited the reſentment of thoſe who were not admitted

* The account of this negotiation with Pulteney, and the ſubſequent tranſactions, are principally derived from the Correſpondence, Period VII.—From Communications by the biſhop of Saliſbury.—Life of biſhop of Newton, who has related the whole tranſaction from the authority of Pulteney, though not without ſome ſlight errors, which I have been enabled to rectify from notes and information, kindly ſupplied by the biſhop of Saliſbury.

admitted to the conferences. Two parties, at a very early period of this buſineſs, were forming againſt the arrangements made by Pulteney, conſiſting of the great body of the Tories, headed by Argyle, which party was joined by the Jacobites, and the other compoſed of thoſe Whigs who were not likely to be compriſed in the new arrangements. Cheſterfield was diſappointed that he was not made ſecretary of ſtate; Waller was irritated at not being chancellor of the exchequer, and thought the ſituation of a lord of the treaſury beneath his acceptance. Cobham, though reſtored to a regiment, and appointed a member of the cabinet, aſpired to a far greater ſhare of power; and the Grenvilles, Lyttleton, Pitt, and Dodington, were highly diſſatisfied that they had no ſhare in the new adminiſtration. Chapter 6. 1742.

In the midſt of this growing diſſatisfaction, a great point was gained by conciliating the prince of Wales. The arrangement with Pulteney was made without the knowledge of the prince, to whom it was not communicated before the 2d of February; but he received the information with due reſpect, * and appeared ſatisfied with the reſult. On the 6th he granted a private audience to Sir Robert Walpole, and promiſed his protection againſt any attacks upon his life or fortune. Prince of Wales conciliated.

While the poſts remained unfilled, and the members of oppoſition conceived hopes that an arrangement might take place in their favour, the great

* Sir Robert Walpole to the duke of Devonſhire, Feb. 2, 1741-2. Correſpondence.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. great body continued apparently united; but when ſuſpicions began to be formed of a ſeparate negotiation, and the places of ſecretary of ſtate, and chancellor of the exchequer, were diſpoſed of, without the general concurrence, murmurs and diſcontents ſucceeded, and a ſchiſm, which Lord Percival * calls, "the death of the late oppoſition," took place on the 11th of February, when the meeting was held at the Fountain Tavern.

Meeting at the Fountain Tavern. Feb. 11. Speech of Argyle.

It conſiſted of not leſs than three hundred members of both houſes of parliament. The duke of Argyle, as we are informed by a perſon who was preſent †, and took an active ſhare on the ſide of Pulteney, expatiated, with great ſolemnity of ſpeech and geſture, on the dangerous ſituation to which the country had been reduced by the late adminiſtration of Sir Robert Walpole, and on the glorious and ſteady oppoſition which had been made to his meaſures; he ſaid, "happily, at length honeſt endeavours and the juſt ſpirit of the people have brought us in ſight of the long wiſhed for haven, and as all parties have contributed to forward this important point, it is juſt that all denominations of men ſhould receive an equal reward of their virtue. If a proper uſe is made of this fortunate conjuncture, this reward may be obtained. We have a right to expect the total rout of all thoſe who formed any part of the miniſterial junto; and ſuch a meaſure would make room for all."

After

* Afterwards earl of Egmont, author of Faction Detected, one of the beſt political pamphlets ever written. See p. 41.

† Faction Detected.

After ſarcaſtically obſerving, in alluſion to Pulteney, that a grain of honeſty was worth a cart load of gold*, he proceeded: "But have we not much reaſon to fear that this uſe will not be made of the happy opportunity; that a few men, without any communication of their proceedings to this aſſembly, have arrogated to themſelves the excluſive right of nomination, and from their manner we have ſufficient cauſe to apprehend that they do not intend the general advantage. They have now been eight days engaged in this buſineſs, and if we are to judge from the few offices they have already beſtowed, they may juſtly be accuſed of not acting with that vigour which the whole people have a right to expect. The choice of thoſe already preferred cannot but ſupply great matter of jealouſy; for as this choice has principally fallen upon the Whigs, it is an ill omen to the Tories: If they are not to be provided for, the happy effects of the coalition will be deſtroyed; and the odious diſtinction of party will be again revived, to the great prejudice of the nation. It is therefore highly neceſſary to continue cloſely united, and to perſevere with the ſame vehemence as ever, till the Tories obtain juſtice, and the adminiſtration is founded upon the *broad bottom* of both parties." Chapter 60. 1742.

To theſe accuſations Pulteney replied with no leſs bitterneſs: He lamented the ſevere treatment which he and his co-adjutors had received in return for their ſervices and for their ſhare in driving the late miniſter from the Pulteney's reply.

* Biſhop Newton.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. the helm, to be thus held forth and publicly charged in the face of the world, with things of which no man durſt venture to accuſe them in private; to be loaded with unjuſt ſuſpicions and imaginary crimes, which though without foundation, would be eaſily believed in the preſent temper of the nation. "We deſerve," he added, "a very different uſage for the integrity with which we have hitherto proceeded, and by which we are determined to proceed. In anſwer to the imputation, that we have taken the management of the negotiation into our hands, let us reply, that overtures having been made to us, it was our duty, (as it would have been the duty of every man, to whom ſuch overtures had been made) to employ all our abilities and endeavours to form a happy ſettlement, after the diviſions with which this country has been ſo long unhappily rent, and which could not longer ſubſiſt without ruining the intereſt of the nation abroad, and incurring the danger of fatal diſturbances at home. The ſuperficial vulgar may indeed conceive that it would have been more equitable to refer the ſettlement to the deciſion of the whole party, but ſurely no man of tolerable underſtanding and experience can cheriſh an idea ſo impracticable and abſurd. Government is not yet reduced to ſurrender at diſcretion, eſpecially to an enemy who has declared publicly that they would give no quarter; government neither can, will, nor ought to be taken by ſtorm; and it behoves gentlemen to conſider the inevitable conſequences of ſuch an attempt. The great points in

agitation were, to change the miniſter, and change the meaſures; the one is already effected, and we will engage to perform the other. Chapter 60. 1742.

" As to the diſtribution of employments, there is neither juſtice, decency, duty, or moderation, in dictating to the king, how to diſpoſe of every preferment in the ſtate. His majeſty has ſhewed a diſpoſition to comply with the deſires of his people in the moſt effectual manner; he has already ſupplied the principal miniſteral poſts with men, who have hitherto enjoyed the confidence of the people, and cannot yet have forfeited their good opinion, becauſe, though nominated, they have none of them yet done any ſingle act of office. As to the changes already made, they are as numerous as the importance of the matter, and the nature of the thing can poſſibly admit ſo ſoon, and it would have been more to the credit of the party, if their patience had extended a little longer than the few days, that have paſſed ſince the time of their adjournment. As to the partial diſtribution of employments to the Whigs, as far as our intereſt ſhall hereafter extend, we will uſe it faithfully to the king and our country, by recommending ſuch perſons, whoſe principles have been miſrepreſented, and who are true to his family, let their appellations be what they will. But it muſt be a work of ſome time, to remove ſuſpicions inculcated long, and long credited, with regard to a denomination of men, who have formerly been thought not heartily attached to the intereſt of the prince upon the throne; ſome inſtances of this intention, have

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been already given in the late removals, and there will be many more; but it muſt depend upon the prudent conduct of the Tories themſelves, wholly to aboliſh theſe unhappy diſtinctions of party." He concluded by requeſting them to conſider the falſe ſtep they had already made, and that this paſſionate and groundleſs diviſion, would infallibly give new courage to the party they had juſt ſubdued; that it diſcovered a weakneſs, of which advantage would be certainly taken; that it muſt inevitably leſſen the power of thoſe who were employed, and, if perſiſted in, would in a great meaſure prevent the ſucceſs of their views, both for the public and their friends.*

Increaſing diſcontents.

When the conteſt was in reality for power, and only in appearance for the public good, it is not to be ſuppoſed that arguments on either ſide drawn from prudential, diſintereſted, and patriotic motives, could have the ſmalleſt weight. The parties ſeparated with the ſame virulence as they had met, and only waited for an open rupture, until all the places were diſpoſed of; each flattering himſelf that he might be included in the propoſed arrangement. †

The reſentment of the diſaffected patriots was ſtill farther aggravated, by the formation of the new

* Faction Detected, p. 42.

† To this meeting at the Fountain Tavern, Sir Charles Hanbury Williams alludes, with his uſual wit and ſatire, in his ode againſt the earl of Bath, called The Stateſman.

"Then enlarge on his cunning and wit:
"Say, how he harangu'd at the Fountain;
"Say, how the old patriots were bit,
"And a mouſe was produc'd by a mountain."

new treaſury board*, announced on the 16th of February, in which only one Tory was included. Chapter 60. 1742.

With a view to allay theſe jealouſies, the prince of Wales propoſed a meeting in his preſence, of the chief leaders of the former oppoſition, particularly Argyle, Cheſterfield, Cobham, Gower, and Bathurſt. Pulteney came, accompanied by Scarborough, prepared to oppoſe or to conciliate. The moſt violent accuſations were levelled againſt him; it was urged, the change of adminiſtration ought to be total; the intended alterations were not ſufficient; too many of the late miniſter's friends would remain in power; Sir Robert Walpole would ſtill act behind the curtain, and direct the whole machine of government.† Pulteney replied, that theſe accuſations were groundleſs; for even upon a ſuppoſition that the ex-miniſter ſhould ſtill continue to be a greater perſonal favourite with the king than any of them, or than all of them together, yet it would not be in his power to diſtreſs them, provided they remained united among themſelves. "Nothing," he added, "but our own diſſenſions can hurt us; we have the ſtaff in our own hands, and the changes now to be made, will enable us to effect farther alterations at the end of the ſeſſion. I have ſtipulated that the duke of Argyle, lord Cobham, lord Gower, the marquis of Tweedale, the earl of Winchelſea, lord Carteret, and myſelf, ſhall be members of the cabinet council, Compoſed by the prince.

* Lord Wilmington, Sandys, Sir John Ruſhout, Philip Gibbon, and George Compton.

† Biſhop Newton, p. 31.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. cil, and we ſhall form ſo great a majority, that the whole power will be in our hands. We ſhall beſides command the whole boards of treaſury and admiralty, and have the appointment of ſeveral other conſiderable places. What then have we to fear? Should we attempt a total change at this period, diſorder and confuſion muſt enſue. By the pledges we poſſeſs at preſent, we have ample ſecurity for future regulations, and with ſuch a power in our hands, we may command any future alterations."

The prince declared himſelf ſatisfied with theſe reaſons; and it was unanimouſly agreed, they ſhould all go to court together. Thus the authority of the prince, and the expectations of the Tories, that Sir John Hynde Cotton would, according to promiſe, be appointed one of the lords of the admiralty, prevented an open rupture.

On the 7th the prince, whoſe eſtabliſhment had been increaſed to £. 100,000 a year, and who was farther gratified with a promiſe of ſeats at the admiralty board for lord Baltimore and lord Archibald Hamilton, paid his perſonal reſpects to the king, and on the 18th, the whole party * who had formed the oppoſition to the late miniſter, made their appearance at court. This event was hailed by the Tories as the beginning of a new æra: "Upon this memorable day," obſerves the author of the Defence of the People, "his majeſty for the firſt time appeared to be the king of ALL HIS PEOPLE, and had the happineſs and glory to ſee himſelf

* Defence of the People.

himſelf in the midſt of a more illuſtrious circle than had ever ſurrounded any of our ſovereigns ſince queen Elizabeth began to narrow the bottom of government, by perſecuting the Puritans." * Chapter 60. 1742.

On the ſame day the two houſes met, and the writs for the members appointed to the new board of treaſury were iſſued. The Tories and diſaffected Whigs did not, however, yet venture to begin a new oppoſition. Argyle accepted the office of maſter-general of the ordnance, and a regiment of horſe of which he had been diſpoſſeſſed. No oppoſition was made to the motion on the 22d for ordering that a million ſhould be taken from the ſinking fund, towards raiſing a ſupply; a mode of proceeding for which they had reprobated Walpole with unabating virulence. The houſe having reſolved itſelf into a committee of ſupply, Philips, a violent Tory member, moved to defer the committee for the purpoſe of taking into conſideration the ſtate of the nation, but he was only feebly ſupported: Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, no leſs vehement on the ſame ſide of the queſtion, was the only member who ſpoke in favour of the motion, and it was dropped without a diviſion. † Parliamentary proceedings.

At length the new board of admiralty was declared ‡, and Sir John Hynde Cotton was not included. As all the places were now diſpoſed of, and all expectations annihilated, the Tories and diſaffected Whigs openly appeared in battle array

* Defence of the People, p. 71.

† Chandler.

‡ The earl of Winchelſea, John Cockburne, lord Archibald Hamilton, lord Baltimore, Philip Cavendiſh, Dr. Lee, John M. Trevor.

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array againſt the new miniſtry. The duke of Argyle, diſguſted that the marquis of Tweedale was appointed ſecretary of ſtate for Scotland, and diſſatisfied that a large body of his needy deſcendents were not provided for, reſigned. The prince of Wales ſoon withdrew his ſupport, and his moſt confidential ſervants, particularly Pitt and Lyttleton, violently oppoſed the new adminiſtration.

New oppoſition

In this ſituation of parties, the Tories and diſaffected Whigs oppoſed the re-election of the members who had accepted the places at the board of admiralty. Lord Baltimore was oppoſed in Surry by the duke of Bedford; Dr. Lee was thrown out at Brackley, by the intereſt of the duke of Bridgewater; lord Limerick, who was to have been appointed ſecretary at war, in the place of Sir William Yonge, could not venture to vacate his ſeat for Taviſtock, on the certainty of not being rechoſen, as it was a borough belonging to the duke of Bedford. He obtained a reverſion of the place of king's remembrancer in Ireland; and Sir William Yonge, the adherent of Sir Robert Walpole, was permitted to continue ſecretary at war.

Orford had now ſucceeded in dividing oppoſition, and forming an adminiſtration on a Whig baſis. The firm phalanx of oppoſition was diſunited; Pulteney was duped and deceived by thoſe with whom he had negotiated, and deſerted even by thoſe whom he had promoted. While he was confined by the ſickneſs and death of his daughter, the other leaders of the oppoſition in the houſe of commons, being eager to prove that they could

Motion againſt lord Orford.

carry a measure without his assistance, lord Limerick moved, on the 9th of March, for a secret committee, to inquire into the administration of Sir Robert Walpole, during the last twenty years. Winchelsea and Carteret, whom Pulteney had particularly favoured, intimated to his friends, without his authority, that it would be agreeable to him if they would not attend; accordingly, the motion being made during his absence, while Sandys was gone to Worcester to be elected, was lost by a majority of only 2; 244 against 242. Chapter 60. 1742. Negatived.

Pulteney, in several audiences, urged repeatedly to the king, that the Tories were by no means Jacobites, and to use them as Jacobites, was the ready way to make them so; that two-thirds of the nation were Tories, and several of them men of large estates. He even ventured to ask the king why he made himself only the head of a party, when he might be king of the whole nation! He himself, he added, was a Whig, his most intimate friends were Whigs. He was of opinion, that the trunk of the tree in the government should be formed of Whigs; but that the Tories might be inoculated or engrafted upon it. The Tories were not masters of calculation, or proficients in the knowledge of languages, and therefore could not nor did not expect the first situations under government: by conferring a few places at court on some of the most considerable, by constituting others lord lieutenants of the counties, and by distributing some other marks of royal favour, he would disarm the whole party, and prevent their uniting in opposition to government. By this conduct, Pulteney remonstrates with the king.

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the king might aboliſh all diſtinctions of parties, and the remainder of his reign might be peaceable and glorious. * But Pulteney was now talking in vain; all his remonſtrances were ineffectual; he was no longer the ſoul of a great party, and loſt that perſonal credit and power which he enjoyed from that ſituation.

Decline of his credit.

Parliamentary inquiry into Walpole's conduct.

The third great object which Orford had to effect, was his own ſecurity, which the temper of parliament, and the popular outcry againſt him, rendered extremely difficult. But the ſupport of the king, the oppoſition of the houſe of peers, the goodneſs of his cauſe, and the ſteady zeal of his friends, finally prevailed: the good ſenſe of the nation was not long to be deluded by vague accuſations of pretended patriots.

It is fortunate, however, for the honour of Sir Robert Walpole, that the inquiry into his adminiſtration took place; as the ordeal which he underwent on this occaſion, was ſuch as could have been paſſed by few miniſters, who had, during ſo long a period, directed the helm of government in a great commercial country, divided into parties, and torn by factions.

Motion for a ſecret committee.

The motion of lord Limerick to inſtitute an inquiry into the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, during the laſt twenty years, had been thrown out, and the loſs of the queſtion had been principally owing to the abſence of Pulteney, and to the intimation that he was averſe to it. With a view to contradict theſe reports, which he conſidered as injurious

* Biſhop Newton.

injurious to his reputation, as if he was desirous of checking an inquiry, lord Limerick, at his request, made a second motion to appoint a secret committee of inquiry into the conduct of the earl of Orford, during the last ten years of his being first commissioner of the treasury, and chancellor and under treasurer of his majesty's exchequer. Chapter 60. 1742.

It will be unnecessary to enter into a detail of the arguments which were urged on both sides, as well on this as on the former occasion, in which the late minister was as vigorously attacked, ably defended, and in which his third son, Horace Walpole, testified his filial affection, by an animated and manly speech against the motion.

It is sufficient to observe, that to accuse a minister of any specific acts of mal-administration, is the privilege of our well-regulated constitution, which no one but a friend to a despotic government, could wish to be removed; but to constitute a *general* inquiry into the conduct of a minister for so long a term as ten years, founded on popular clamours and vague suspicions, without particularizing any act of guilt, and especially for measures which had been legally sanctioned by parliament, seemed as unjust as it was unconstitutional. It required all the powers of Pulteney, who is said to have still preserved "a miraculous influence in the house of commons,"* and all the eloquence of Pitt, who eminently distinguished himself in both these debates, to palliate or justify such a flagrant abuse of parliamentary interference;

* Defence of the People, or Answer to Faction Detected.

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ence; and it demanded all the accumulated weight of the Tories and diſaffected Whigs, to carry it through the houſe, by a majority of only ſeven, 252 againſt 245.

Committee appointed.

The motion having paſſed, a committee of ſecrecy, conſiſting of twenty-one members, was appointed, and empowered to examine, in the moſt ſolemn manner, ſuch perſons as they thought proper on the ſubject matter of their inquiry. Of the twenty-one members * appointed by ballot, all except two were the uniform opponents of the late miniſter. The diſaffected Whigs accuſed the Tories of having acted falſely in permitting the introduction of Sir Henry Lydal and Talbot, with a view to perplex the buſineſs, while the Tories on their ſide accuſed Sandys of being rather a ſpy than an aſſociate, and of rather embarraſſing than forwarding the buſineſs. †

The earl of Orford, however, ſeems to have formed a more judicious opinion of this circumſtance. For being congratulated that two of his friends were appointed members of the ſecret committee, he replied, "They will become ſo zealous for the honour of the committee, that they will no longer pay ſufficient regard to *mine*." ‡

Armed with ſuch extenſive powers, the committee of ſecrecy commenced their operations, by chooſing

*Sir John St. Aubin, Samuel Sandys, Sir John Ruſhout, George Compton, lord Quarendon, William Noel, Sir John Barnard, lord Limerick, lord Cornbury, Nicholas Fazakerly, Henry Furneſe, lord Granard, Cholmondeley Turner, Edmund Waller, William Pitt, Thomas Prowſe, William Bowles, Edward Hooper, Sir John Strange, Sir Henry Lydal, and John Talbot.—Chandler.

† Defence of the People, p. 109.

‡ From Lord Orford.

chooſing lord Limerick chairman. They applied with indefatigable diligence to the inſpection of the treaſury books and papers; they examined many perſons who were ſuppoſed to have been the private agents of Sir Robert Walpole, in his ſchemes of corruption, bribery, and dilapidation of the public revenue.

The expectations of the nation were raiſed to the greateſt height; the meaſures of the miniſter who had been held forth as a public delinquent, as having ſquandered and appropriated the public money, were brought before a tribunal, conſiſting of perſons who were both willing and able to trace his miſconduct, and diſcover his enormities. It was naturally expected that in ſo long an adminiſtration, big with difficulties, and teeming with internal troubles, numerous inſtances of corrupt influence and notorious malverſation would have been diſcovered; and that his opponents had ſome foundation for the crimes which they had laid to his charge. But it ſoon appeared that they had advanced accuſations which they could not prove; and that the charges urged with ſuch confidence in the forcible language of Pitt, could not be authenticated. "I fear not to declare," obſerved that eminent orator, with all the baneful ſpirit of party, "that I expect, in conſequence of ſuch inquiry, to find, that our treaſure has been exhauſted, not to humble our enemies, or to obviate domeſtic inſurrections, not to ſupport our allies, or to ſuppreſs our factions; but for purpoſes which no man who loves his country can think of without

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out indignation, the purchaſe of votes, the bribing of boroughs, the enriching of hirelings, the multiplying of dependents, and the corruption of parliaments." *

The want of ſufficient proofs, drawn from authentic papers and voluntary evidence, reduced the committee to ſo great a dilemma, that for the purpoſe of proving thoſe enormities, which they deemed had been committed, they had recourſe to a very extraordinary and unprecedented propoſition. For the diſcoveries which they were able to make were inconſiderable, when compared with the atrociouſneſs of the charges; and they attributed the inefficacy of their inquiries to the arts and obſtinacy of the ex-miniſter's friends and dependents.

It is an eſtabliſhed maxim in all governments, that ſecret ſervice money muſt be employed for the public advantage, and the diſpoſal of that money is, in limited governments like our's, always confided to the king, under the direction and controul of his miniſters, who are reſponſible to parliament. Among the miniſters, the firſt lord of the treaſury, as having the chief direction of the finances, is principally entruſted with the diſtribution.

With a view to prove Sir Robert Walpole guilty of abuſing or miſmanaging this part of the public revenue, they examined ſome of the inferior agents who muſt always be employed in that ſpecies of negotiation. The ſum of £.95,000, had paſſed through

* Chandler's Debates.

through the hands of Paxton, ſolicitor to the treaſury. Being called upon to give an account of that money, he was firſt examined about £. 500, which had been paid to one Boteler in 1735, for the purpoſe of carrying his election for the borough of Wendover. Paxton being repeatedly aſked if he had advanced any money on that account, repeatedly refuſed to anſwer that queſtion, as it might tend to accuſe himſelf. For this ſpecies of contumacy, he was committed to Newgate, by an order of the houſe. Gwyn Vaughan being examined by the committee, in regard to a practice with which the late miniſter was charged, of obliging a poſſeſſor of a place to pay a certain ſum from the profits, to a perſon recommended by government, followed the example of Paxton, and declined making any reply, as it might affect himſelf. Chapter 60. 1742.

Scrope, ſecretary to the treaſury, and member of the houſe of commons, being next examined in regard to the diſpoſal of £. 1,052,211, which had, within the term of ten years, been traced into his and Sir Robert Walpole's hands, declined the oath of diſcovery, avowing that he could not, conſiſtently with his conſcience, take a general oath, while particular queries might ariſe, which he was determined not to anſwer, and he added, that he could reply to no interrogation, concerning ſecret ſervice money, without the permiſſion of the king. On being again examined, he acquainted the committee "he had conſulted the ableſt lawyers and divines, and they had made his ſcruples ſtronger;

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he did not do it to obſtruct the committee, but he could not, as an honeſt man, and with a ſafe conſcience, take the oath. He had laid his caſe before the king, and was authoriſed to ſay, that the diſpoſal of money, iſſued for ſecret ſervice, by the nature of it, requires the utmoſt ſecrecy, and is accountable to his majeſty only; and therefore his majeſty could not permit him to diſcloſe any thing on the ſubject. He hoped he ſhould not incur the diſpleaſure of the committee, for if the oath was confined, he was ready to be examined. Upon this anſwer, he was no further preſſed." *

Several others in the ſame manner refuſing to anſwer, the committee were perplexed, and confounded between their ſtrong inclination to convict, and the impoſſibility of effecting their purpoſe by the common mode of legal or parliamentary proceeding.

Bill of indemnity.

They therefore publiſhed their celebrated report,† and moved in the houſe of commons, for a bill, "to indemnify ſuch perſons, as ſhould upon examination, make diſcoveries, touching the diſpoſition of offices, or any payment or agreement in reſpect thereof, or concerning other matters belonging to the conduct of Robert earl of Orford." ‡

Many words are not required to ſhew the fatal tendency of a bill, calculated to ſuborn witneſſes, to multiply accuſations, to encourage villains to accuſe

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 543. Chandler.

† See the next chapter.

‡ Tindal, vol. 20. p. 544.

accuſe a perſon who was innocent, or at leaſt, ſhould be deemed innocent until he was proved guilty, to bribe men to give evidence to ſave their own lives and eſtates; a bill in which the inquiry was uncertain, and the indemnity as uncertain as the diſcovery which the witneſſes might make. For it did not lay down any ſpecific object of which the earl of Orford was ſuppoſed guilty, it did not offer the payment of a certain ſum of money, or the pardon of any particular crime; but the perſons who gave evidence were to be indemnified for *all* the ſums which they might loſe, and receive a pardon for *all* the crimes which they might diſcloſe, in giving evidence againſt the earl of Orford. It was holding up the ex-miniſter as a public felon, and converting the houſe of commons into a tribunal of blood. * Chapter 60. 1742.

Although the paſſing of this inquiſition bill caſts a ſevere reflection on the houſe of commons, yet it affords ſome conſolation, that it was not carried without a conſiderable ſtruggle, and by a majority of only twelve, 228 againſt 216. Paſſes the commons.

The debates in the houſe of commons, on this important occaſion, have never been given to the public;

* The words of the bill are a ſufficient juſtification of theſe cenſures, "That all perſons who ſhall truly and faithfully diſcloſe and diſcover, to the beſt of their knowledge, remembrance, and belief, all ſuch matters and things, as they ſhall be examined unto, touching or concerning the ſaid inquiry and relative thereunto, ſhall be, and are thereby indemnified and diſcharged, of and from all forfeitures, penalties, puniſhments, diſabilities, and incapacities which they ſhall, or may incur, or become ſubject to, for or by reaſon or means of any matter or thing, which they ſhall ſo truly and faithfully diſcover and make known, touching or concerning the ſaid inquiry, and relative thereunto; viz. of all matters relating to the conduct of the earl of Orford, for ten years laſt paſt."

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public; but thoſe which took place when it was diſcuſſed in the houſe of peers are recorded in the contemporary publications. The reader may indulge his curioſity, in the peruſal of this debate, which affords a ſtriking inſtance of the baneful influence of party ſpirit. *

He will be ſhocked at the inſinuation of Bathurſt, as calculated for the meridian of deſpotiſm, "*that the introduction of new methods of proſecution is the natural conſequence of new ſchemes of villany, and new ſchemes of evaſion.*" But he will turn with horror from the malignant compariſon of Cheſterfield, who endeavoured to prove, that *ſuch an indemnity was not a new thing in our conſtitution, becauſe rewards were daily offered to highwaymen and murderers, for the diſcovery of their accomplices.*

He will read, however, with pleaſure, the manly remark of lord chancellor Hardwicke, "that names will not change the nature of the things to which they are applied." "The bill is calculated," he ſaid, "to make a defence impoſſible, to deprive innocence of its guard, and to let looſe oppreſſion and perjury upon the world. It is a bill to dazzle the wicked with a proſpect of ſecurity, and to incite them to purchaſe an indemnity for one crime, by the perpetration of another. It is a bill to confound the notions of right and wrong, to violate the eſſence of our conſtitution, and to leave us without any certain ſecurity for our property, or rule for our actions." †

It

* Gentleman's and London Magazines.—Lords' Debates.

† Lords' Debates, vol. 8. p. 167.

Chapter 60. 1742.

It reflects the higheſt honour on the houſe of lords, that it was rejected by a much larger majority than even the place and penſion bills *, which affords a ſufficient anſwer to thoſe who confidently aſſert that its rejection was wholly owing to the influence of the crown, in conſequence of a compromiſe with Pulteney, and that the proſecution was only a colluſion. I can trace no ſigns of ſuch a compromiſe; I obſerve the ſecret committee eager to prove the miniſter culpable. I obſerve Sandys, and the members of the new adminiſtration, as violent in their unqualified aſſertions of his guilt, as the Tories and diſaffected Whigs, who were excluded by the arrangement of Pulteney. If I compare the 109 peers, who voted againſt the bill, with the 57 who voted for it, I find the ſame proportion of men of property, independence, and probity in the one, as in the other liſt; and on an impartial review of the ſubject, I cannot conſider their rejection of this bill, in any other light than as an act of juſtice, which did not conſtrue ſuſpicion into a proof of guilt, which ſet bounds to party ſpirit and Jacobite proſecution; and I look up with reverence to that branch of our conſtitution, which more than once has ſaved this country from the overgrown prerogative of the crown, and from the violence of popular frenzy.

Rejected by the lords.

The rejection of the indemnity bill by the houſe of peers, was received with ſuch diſſatisfaction by the

* Place Bill, - - - 81 againſt 52 majority 29.
Penſion Bill, - - 76 - - 46 - - 30.
Indemnity Bill, - - 109 - - 57 - - 52.

Lords' Debates.

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the inveterate enemies of the ex-minister, that lord Strange moved in the house of commons, "That the lords refusing to concur with the commons of Great Britain, in an indemnification necessary to the effectual carrying on the inquiry, now depending in parliament, was an obstruction to justice, and might prove fatal to the liberties of this nation." * This violent motion was opposed, not only by the friends of the late minister, but even by Pulteney, and the new members of the administration, and by some of the Tories, who declared, that although they wished the bill had passed, yet they could not agree to a resolution which would create a breach between the two houses: it was accordingly thrown out by a majority of 52.

Pulteney created earl of Bath.

The day on which parliament was prorogued, Pulteney was called to the house of peers, by the title of earl of Bath.

His unpopularity.

Walpole had now the pleasure, if it be any pleasure to a great mind, to see the celebrated commoner, who had driven him from the helm, as much exposed to obloquy, as he himself had ever been in the plenitude of his power and unpopularity. He saw him lampooned in ballads replete with wit, reviled both by ministerial and opposition writers, his influence sunk so low, that he, who for a few days possessed the whole authority of the crown, was now unable to command for a friend a cornetcy of dragoons, or a lieutenancy of the

* Tindal, vol. 20, p. 546. Chandler.

the navy.* In fact, the credit of Pulteney was so much reduced, that on his remonſtrating to the duke of Newcaſtle, that the king had broken his promiſe of appointing Sir John Hynde Cotton one of the lords of the admiralty; Newcaſtle replied, "his majeſty has another ſhop to go to," alluding to the duke of Argyle, who had deſerted Pulteney, and joined thoſe who oppoſed the new adminiſtration. †

Chapter 60. 1742.

He ſaw him reviled, perſecuted, and loaded with ſuch improbable accuſations, as receiving a peerage and an eſtate in London from the crown, for ſcreening the miniſter from public vengeance.

Unjuſtly accuſed.

I think it a duty, and feel a ſatisfaction in being able to reſcue the name of Pulteney from indiſcriminate cenſure, and to prove, from the moſt unequivocal facts, that he has been unjuſtly accuſed of acting from baſe and ſordid motives.

In

* To this decline of his influence, Sir Charles H. Williams alludes in one of his ſatirical ballads:

"Great earl of Bath your reign is o'er;
The Tories truſt you word no more,
The Whigs no longer fear ye;
Your gates are ſeldom now unbarr'd,
No crowds of coaches fill your yard,
And ſcarce a ſoul comes near ye.
"Few now aſpire at your good graces,
Scarce any ſue to you for places,
Or come with their petition,
To tell how well they have deſerv'd,
How long, how ſteadily they ſtarv'd
For you in oppoſition:
"Expect to ſee that tribe no more,
Since all mankind perceive that pow'r
Is lodg'd in other hands.
Sooner to Carteret now they'll go,
Or ev'n (though that's exceſſive low)
To Wilmington and Sands."

Williams's Poems, p. 43.

† From the biſhop of Saliſbury.

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In regard to the peerage, he had never concealed his intention of procuring that dignity, for he had been frequently heard to ſay to his friends, "When I have turned out Sir Robert Walpole, I will retire into that hoſpital of invalids, the houſe of peers." But it is no leſs true, that he had repeatedly declined the honour under his adminiſtration. He who had driven out Walpole, who had declined the office of prime miniſter, who had made lord Wilmington firſt lord of the treaſury, and filled the boards of treaſury and admiralty, might eaſily have claimed for himſelf a peerage, without terms. The truth is, that Pulteney delayed accepting the title, until he had obtained the privy ſeal for the earl of Gower, who was obnoxious to the miniſtry; while lord Hervey, who held that diſtinguiſhed office, was ſupported with all the influence of the king. In fact, he was ſo mortified by repeated inſtances of ill treatment, as to meditate a renewal of his oppoſition. He is even ſaid to have received his new dignity with diſguſt, and to have trampled the patent of peerage under his feet.*

The ſecond accuſation againſt Pulteney, that for the purpoſe of ſcreening the miniſter from public vengeance, he received from the crown a grant of a conſiderable eſtate in Piccadilly, is alſo no leſs unfounded. For this very accuſation had been advanced in 1731, and was then amply refuted by Pulteney

* From lord Orford.

Pulteney himſelf.* He ſhewed that the eſtate in queſtion was a family eſtate of about £. 1,200 or £. 1,300 a year, held by a leaſe of ninety-nine years from the crown, and that he purchaſed the perpetuity at a fair price. Chapter 60. 1742.

This ſtatement of the tranſaction does not however ſolely reſt on Pulteney's own aſſertion; it is confirmed by the act of parliament itſelf, which paſſed on the 14th of February 172$\frac{0}{1}$, and alſo from a letter † from the duke of Montagu to Sir Robert Walpole, requeſting him to obtain from George the Second, the permiſſion of purchaſing certain

* It is thus ſtated by the author of a review of Mr. Pulteney's conduct:

"Pulteney hoped that by giving up all lucrative employments, and barely accepting a title, he had ſilenced obloquy and removed ſuſpicion. But the avarice of his temper was ſo well and univerſally underſtood, that it was vulgarly ſuppoſed he had accepted large ſums for making the compromiſe between the crown and the leaders of the oppoſition; this was indeed looked upon to be equally an idle or groundleſs ſurmiſe: however, *it is very certain* that a great part of Piccadilly, which produced a very large income, and which *till that time*, had belonged to the crown, became *all of a ſudden* the property of Mr. Pulteney." To this imputation, Pulteney himſelf replied:

"It is true, indeed, that this gentleman hath a very large eſtate, which hath been in his family for many generations. Some part of his eſtate was held by a leaſe from the crown, of which there was a term of ninety-nine years to come, after a term that was then in being. His grandfather left his eſtate in truſtees, to be ſold for the purchaſe of other lands of inheritance. Upon this occaſion, he applied to the crown to buy off the inheritance, not as a favour, but as a fair purchaſer, and was at the expence of an act of parliament to obtain it. He paid more than Sir Iſaac Newton, or any other calculator, computes the value of ſuch a purchaſe to be; for it coſt him altogether, with charges, a year's purchaſe to make it inheritance: and I believe no body will pretend to argue that an inheritance, after a term of above an hundred years to come, is worth one year's purchaſe, nor would this gentlemen have given one ſingle ſhilling for it, if it had not been to get his eſtate out of truſtees hands.

"This is the fact; and what was the value of the eſtate thus purchaſed? Not above twelve or thirteen hundred pounds a year; which is but a ſmall part of this gentleman's eſtate, even according to your own calculation; moſt of which was land of inheritance before."

† Walpole Papers.

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certain eſtates in reverſion; as a foundation for the grant, he obſerves, that his late majeſty, George the Firſt, had, *in the 8th year of his reign, granted to Mr. Pulteney the inheritance of ſeveral lands and tenements in St. James's, in reverſion of above 99 years then in being.*

It is but juſtice to the memory of Pulteney, who has been ſo much calumniated for this part of his political conduct, to add his own apology, as given by himſelf, in a letter, written to biſhop Newton.* "In every thing I did, when the change was made, I know I acted honeſtly, I am ſure I acted diſintereſtedly, and if I did not do what the world may call wiſely, it was the fault of a few friends who betrayed me, of the court that meant to weaken me, and of many others who too haſtily miſtruſted me, and turned their backs upon me. But time (as I always thought it would) has cleared up all theſe points; and I have the ſatisfaction to imagine that the king now wiſhes he had given into my ſchemes; the friends who betrayed me are ſenſible of, and ſorry for their folly; and they who oppoſed me, though ſome of them have ſince got power into their own hands, are ſenſible how mean a figure they make with it, and how unequal they are to the poſts they have. Certain it is, that no one can be ſo capable of writing hiſtory, as he who has been principally concerned in the great tranſactions; and if ever it ſhould be neceſſary to inform the world (which I believe it will not) of the hiſtory of the late change, no one can to

* Auguſt 15, 1745. Life of Biſhop Newton.

to be ſure do it, or at leaſt furniſh materials for doing it, ſo well as myſelf, for I may truly ſay, *Pars magna fui*; and I do not apprehend, nor can recollect one ſingle fact, no not one circumſtance in the whole affair, that it can be neceſſary to ſuppreſs or diſguiſe. If avarice, ambition, or the deſire of power had influenced me, why did I not take (and no one can deny but I might have had) the greateſt poſt in the kingdom? But I contented myſelf with the honeſt pride of having ſubdued the great author of corruption, retired with a peerage, which I had three times at different periods of my life refuſed, and left the government to be conducted by thoſe who had more inclination than I had to be concerned in it. I ſhould have been happy, if I could have united an adminiſtration capable of carrying on the government with ability, œconomy, and honour."

Chapter 60. 1742.

A friend of Pulteney has alſo given a full explanation of his conduct, and ſtated the inſuperable difficulties which he had to encounter from the diſcordant views of that heterogeneous oppoſition, which, with all his influence and abilities, he could not unite in ſentiment, though he had ſucceeded in uniting them for the purpoſe of forming a conſiſtent plan of attack.

"Like an oppoſition in parliament, carried on againſt an overgrown miniſter, all ſorts of parties and connexions, all ſorts of diſagreeing and contradictory intereſts, join againſt him, at firſt, as a common enemy, and tolerable unanimity is preſerved amongſt them, ſo long as the fate of this

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. parliamentary war continues in ſuſpence. But when once they have driven him to the wall, and think themſelves ſure of victory, the jealouſies and ſuſpicions, which while the conteſt depended had been ſtifled, break out; every one, who ſhared in the fatigue, expects to ſhare in the ſpoils, ſeparate intereſts counteract each other, ſeparate negotiations are ſet on foot, till at laſt, by untimely and unneceſſary diviſion, they loſe the fruits of their victory, and the object of the common reſentment is able to make terms for himſelf." *

* To this paſſage the author ſubjoined a note: "The true hiſtory of the tranſaction here alluded to, may poſſibly, ſome time or other appear; though as yet, we are perſuaded, the world knows very little of it." Letter to two Great Men, 1760, p. 35. This excellent pamphlet was written by Dr. Douglas, now biſhop of Saliſbury, who in explanation, aſſured me that it was the intention of lord Bath, to have arranged, from his own recollection and papers, a hiſtory of the events which accompanied and followed the reſignation of Sir Robert Walpole. That he afterwards changed his mind, and ſaid he would leave this taſk to Dr. Douglas, who ſhould draw up an account after his death, and pointed to ſeveral papers which would be of uſe to him. From a knowledge of theſe facts, the public naturally formed the higheſt expectations, and biſhop Newton juſtly obſerves, "As Dr. Pearce had ſome knowledge of theſe and other tranſactions, ſo Dr. Douglas, by converſing ſeveral years almoſt daily with lord Bath, had frequent opportunities of informing himſelf of the truth of many particulars, and having collected ſufficient materials for the purpoſe, is well qualified to draw the juſt character, and to complete the hiſtory of his noble patron, a debt which he owes to his memory, and it is hoped will one time or other fully diſcharge, ſo that conformably to the rule, in the mouth of two or three witneſſes, every word may be eſtabliſhed."

On the death, however, of lord Bath, general Pulteney deſtroyed all his papers, and the world has to regret that the learned prelate was, by this unfortunate circumſtance, prevented from accompliſhing a deſign, for which he alone could be ſufficiently qualified.

CHAPTER THE SIXTY-FIRST:

1742.

Examination of the Report of the Secret Committee.—Heads of Accuſation urged againſt Sir Robert Walpole.—Undue Influence in Elections.—Grants of fraudulent Contracts.—Peculation, and Profuſion in the Expenditure of the Money for Secret Service.—His private Fortune, pecuniary Acquirements, and the State of his Affairs at his Death.

THE charges againſt the ex-miniſter, which reſult from the report of the ſecret committee, may be reduced to three principal heads: Begun Saturday, November 7, and finiſhed Friday, November 13.

1. Undue influence in elections:
2. Granting fraudulent contracts:
3. Peculation, and profuſion in the expenditure of ſecret ſervice money.

The firſt charge, of undue influence in elections, is confined principally to the offer of a place of collector of the port of Weymouth to the mayor, if he would uſe his influence in obtaining the nomination of a returning officer; the promiſe of a living to the brother-in-law of the mayor for the ſame purpoſe; the removal of ſome revenue officers, who refuſed to give their votes for the miniſterial candidate, and the diſtribution of ſome trifling ſums for borough proſecutions and ſuits. Such petty abuſes of power, which were ſwelled in the report * into almoſt capital charges, were ſo much The firſt charge examined.

* "The conteſt is plain and viſible; it is: Whether the commons ſhall retain the third ſtate in their own hands, whilſt this whole diſpute is carried on at the expence of the people; but, on the other ſide of the miniſter,

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. much below the dignity of the houſe, as to throw ridicule on their proceedings, and to excite the contempt of the public.

Second charge. The ſecond charge, of granting fraudulent contracts, is reduced to a *ſingle* contract, given to Peter Burrel and John Briſtow, two members of the houſe of commons, for furniſhing money at Jamaica, towards the payment of the Britiſh troops; into which a friend of Mr. Hanbury Williams was admitted by his recommendation, and by which the contractors gained £. 14. 3 s. 2½ d. per cent.* But even admitting the truth of the ſtatement, the bargain,

miniſter, out of the money granted to ſupport and ſecure the conſtitutional independency of the three branches of the legiſlature.

"This method of corruption is as ſure, and therefore your committee apprehend, as criminal a way of ſubverting the conſtitution as by an armed force, it is a crime productive of a total deſtruction of the very being of this government, and is ſo high and unnatural, that nothing but the powers of parliament can reach it; and as it can never meet with parliamentary animadverſion, but when it is unſucceſsful, it muſt ſeek for its ſecurity in the extent and efficacy of the miſchief it produces; and therefore your committee apprehend it is the more neceſſary for your conſideration, while its want of ſucceſs yet leaves an opportunity to preſerve and maintain your independency for the future." Report of the Committee of Secrecy, p. 24.

* "Your committee have been obliged to dwell the longer upon this contract, becauſe the whole behaviour of the earl of Orford, who had the ſole direction of it, ſeems ſo extraordinary, that they fear this part of the report would want credit, if they had not deſcended into the moſt minute parts of it.

"Here they find a contract entered into upon the good faith of the propoſers only, with an ignorance of the value of the exchange, whether real or affected does not appear to your committee; and that defect ſo far from being endeavoured to be ſupplied by admitting propoſals, or information from any other merchants, that it ſeemed a determined point to ſhut it out, even where it ſeemed to obtrude itſelf upon him from the very offices ſubject to his inſpection.

"But as if this injury to the troops and injuſtice to the nation had been too little, he rendered this contract more advantageous to the contractors, than their moſt ſanguine expectation originally ſuggeſted to them.

"For though by the terms of the contract, the public was only to advance £. 27,000 in money, yet we find the further ſum of £. 42,000 advanced to them before the arrival of the troops in America.

"And

bargain, when first made, could not be unfavourable to the public: because, as appears upon the report, Burrel would not, on account of the risk, accept the whole contract, but admitted Bristow as his partner, and even offered a part of his share to his brothers, and two other gentlemen; all of whom declined for the same reason.

Third charge.

The next charge, that of peculation, and extravagance in the expenditure of the public money, is of a far more serious nature.

In order to affix the stigma of peculation on Sir Robert Walpole, it was necessary to shew, that the sums employed for secret service during the last ten years of his administration, were much greater than the sums expended on the same occasion, during an equal number of years, in any of the preceding reigns; and in making this comparative statement, the committee appear to realise the axiom, that "he who proves too much proves nothing." "The issuing," observes the committee, "such an immense part of the money, given for the support of the civil government, to these particular uses, during a time of profound tranquillity till the late rupture with Spain, greatly alarmed your committee, and put them upon examining what sums

"And your committee observe, that the shares of the profits of this contract were dealt out to the deputy of the pay office, and to a friend of the paymaster of the marines, at the request of the said paymaster, without any advance of money, or trouble on their part; and it is very remarkable, that these shares were confined to the sums issued from their respective offices.

"And here your Committee must observe, from the whole course of this proceeding, that neither the interest of the soldier, or the public, seemed to have been the object of the earl of Orford's attention." Report of the Committee of Secrecy, p. 13.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745.

ſums had been iſſued for the ſame ſervices, in a period for the like number of years. And your committee beg leave to repreſent to you, that exorbitant as this ſum may ſeem, they would have ſuppreſſed this part of their report, if by the compariſon they had entered upon, they could any ways have reconciled their ſilence upon this head, to their duty in this houſe and the nation; and your committee hope, that the period they have pitched upon, will evince the truth of this intention, as it comprehends a general and moſt expenſive war abroad, a demiſe of the crown, the happy eſtabliſhment of the preſent royal family upon the throne, and an open and dangerous rebellion at home; in ſhort, every event that can happen to juſtify extraordinary expences in carrying on the buſineſs of government. And it is not eaſy to expreſs the ſurpriſe of your committee, when they found by the account laid before them, which is annexed, (N° 11) that from the 1ſt day of Auguſt 1707, to the 1ſt day of Auguſt 1717, there was iſſued under the aforeſaid heads, no more than the ſum of £. 337,960. 4s. 5½d."

The ſtatement brought forward with ſuch affected candour and moderation, is partial and inaccurate.

The partiality will appear from commencing the inquiry into the expenditure in 1707. For the adoption of this year, there ſeems no particular reaſon, excepting, that had they begun with the years immediately preceding, the ſecret ſervice money would have been conſiderably larger. For in 1707, the union with Scotland was effected;

and it is a well known fact, that large ſums * of money were remitted, in 1705 and 1706, to Scotland, for the purpoſe of purchaſing the conſent, or ſilencing the oppoſition of the refractory natives, who vehemently reſiſted the eſtabliſhment of the Union. Chapter 61. 1742.

Another proof of partiality is no leſs evident from cloſing their comparative ſtatement with Auguſt 1717; at the time when the large penſion granted to the abbot du Bois, the complicated negotiations for the quadruple alliance, and the neceſſity of corrupting the ſenate of Sweden, on the death of Charles the Twelfth, and many domeſtic particulars, which rendered the expences of Sunderland's adminiſtration peculiarly heavy, muſt have increaſed the total amount of ſecret ſervice money, during the years which immediately followed 1717.

Another proof of partiality appears from confining their ſtatement to only one term; for had they acted on the common principles of juſtice, they ought to have compared the ſecret expenditure, from 1731 to 1741, with that of ſeveral terms of ten years, from the reſtoration to the year 1731. Had they only ſelected the ten firſt years of queen Anne, from 1702 to 1712, or the firſt ten years of George the Firſt, from 1714 to 1724, the average amount of the ſums expended in ſecret ſervice would have been conſiderably ſwelled; and perhaps to as large, if not to a larger amount,

* At one draft £. 20,000 was ſent to the Scottiſh treaſury for that purpoſe. Smollett, vol. 2. p. 93.

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amount, than thoſe diſburſed on the ſame occaſion from 1731 to 1741. Had they only conſulted and compared their own account of the three years, from Auguſt 1717 to Auguſt 1720, they might have found that during that period the expenditure for ſecret ſervice, ſpecial ſervice, and to reimburſe expences, amounted to £. 228,000; but they purpoſely omitted this juſt and candid method of proceeding, becauſe Sir Robert Walpole was at that time in oppoſition, and had no ſhare in the diſtribution. Had they carefully conſulted the treaſury books for the four ſucceeding years, they would have found £. 458,000 was expended on the ſame account.* Had they carried their comparative ſtatement ſtill farther, they would have found that, in 1725, the year in which the Hanover treaty was concluded, the ſecret ſervice money, expended between the 1ſt of May and the 4th of March, amounted to £. 218,132.† But ſuch an inquiry was not conformable to their views; which were, to diminiſh the amount of the ſums expended before the year 1731, that thoſe diſburſed during the laſt ten years of Walpole's adminiſtration might appear enormouſly large.

In the ſecond place, the ſtatement of the committee is not a full and exact account of *all* the ſums employ in ſecret ſervice money from 1707 to 1717. For half of the term ſpecified in the comparative

* Note in Sir Robert Walpole's hand-writing, at the end of an abſtract of the civil liſt, made in 1725.

† An Account of bounties, ſecret ſervices, and other payments in the nature of ſecret ſervice, made between the 1ſt of May 1725, and the 4th of March following. In the Orford Papers.

parative ſtatement, was a time of war, when an extraordinary * allowance of £. 10,000 per annum is granted for procuring ſecret intelligence, and 2 ½ per cent. deducted from the pay of all the foreign forces in the ſervice of Great Britain, which, in five years, amounted to £. 178,802. 14 s. was principally employed for the ſame purpoſe. † It follows, therefore, that no juſt medium of compariſon can be drawn from the money employed for ſecret ſervice, in time of war and in time of peace; becauſe in time of peace expences of this nature have no eſtabliſhed proviſion, whereas in time of war extraordinary allowances are appropriated for that purpoſe. Chapter 61. 1742.

In addition to theſe extraordinary allowances, muſt likewiſe be joined a part of the civil liſt debt of £. 500,000, which was paid by parliament in 1713, and of £. 400,000, which the queen owed at her demiſe.

I have no particular documents which enable me to prove *unqueſtionably*, that *all* the ſums expended for ſecret ſervice, during the three firſt years of George the Firſt, ending in Auguſt 1717, are not ſpecified. But I have reaſon to aſſert, with full confidence, that it was ſo; for it is more than probable, that part of the debt of £. 800,000 on the civil liſt which was paid off in 1720 and 1721, was contracted before Auguſt 1717. For that a part of the debt contracted by the civil liſt, was always ſuppoſed to have been expended in ſecret ſervice money, is proved from the motion made

* Faction Detected, p. 140.

† Report of the Commiſſioners, in 1712.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. made by Pulteney in the houſe of commons, in 1725, on the propoſal to pay the debt on the civil liſt, to addreſs the king for an account of all monies which had been iſſued and paid to any perſon or perſons, on account, for the privy purſe, *ſecret ſervice*, penſions, *bounties*, or any ſum or ſums of money to any perſon or perſons *without account* from March 25, 1721, to March 21, 1725.

From theſe remarks the fallacy of the obſervation will ſufficiently appear, "that the ſums expended on theſe ſervices during the laſt ten years, amount to *near five times* as *much* as was expended in the ten years ending in Auguſt 1717; and that the two remarkable years, 1733 and 1734, amount to £. 312,128. 19*s*. 7*d*. being *conſiderably more* than the *total* of the whole ten years, from 1707 to 1717."

Nor can the injuſtice of the committee be ſufficiently reprobated for ſelecting, as a matter of animadverſion, what ought to have been a ſubject of praiſe; the two remarkable years, 1733 and 1734, in which commenced thoſe complicated negotiations, that ſucceeded the death of Auguſtus king of Poland, when the ſum of £. 312,128. 19*s*. 7*d*. for ſecret ſervice, which they malignantly held forth to public cenſure, was well expended for procuring that ſecret intelligence, and for gaining thoſe miniſters abroad which prevented a war with France and Spain, that would have added ſeveral millions to the national debt.

Having thus endeavoured to ſhew that the conduct of the committee in comparing the ſecret expenditure,

penditure, during the laſt ten years of Sir Robert Walpole's adminiſtration, with the ten years from 1707 to 1717, was partial and fallacious, I ſhall next examine the account itſelf; and ſhall endeavour to prove that their ſtatement was equally unjuſt. The report claſſes ſecret expenditure under two principal heads. The firſt relates to the ſecret ſervice money, of which the deſtination was not, and could not be ſpecified, becauſe it was expended for the ſecret purpoſes of government. It amounts to little more than the half, or £. 786,355. 17 *s.* 4 *d.* The ſecond compriſes that money, the diſtribution of which is ſpecified, and which is divided into ſpecial ſervice, amounting to £. 272,504. 0 *s.* 8 *d.* and to reimburſe expences, amounting to £. 205,390. 17 *s.* 10 *d.* They likewiſe added other articles, £. 66,000 for the ſecretaries of ſtate, £. 68,800 upon account to the ſolicitor of the treaſury, and £. 50,077. 18 *s.* to authors and printers. Theſe totals, with a few other ſmall articles, amount to £. 1,440,128, which is ſtated to be the expence of the civil government in ſecret ſervice money, during the ſpace of ten years.

But although the report then continues by endeavouring to prove, that the money, iſſued under the three heads of ſecret ſervice, ſpecial ſervice, and to reimburſe expences, was underſtood to mean one and the ſame thing; and though they ſhew that, according to the forms and accounts of the treaſury, they are uſually compriſed under the ſame head; " yet who does not perceive a very

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. wide difference between ſecret ſervices, and the other two articles of ſpecial ſervice, and the reimburſement of expences, although it is probable, that ſome part of the money, under theſe two heads, has been really applied that way? Yet very great ſums muſt have been iſſued under theſe titles, to purpoſes very different from thoſe which ought to have given ſo much alarm to the public." * And it is to be obſerved, that till the paſſing of Burke's bill, all treaſury penſions were charged to the ſecret ſervice.

As to the other three articles, viz. That of the ſolicitor of the treaſury, that of the allowance of £. 3,000 per annum to each of the ſecretaries of ſtate, and that of the money iſſued to authors and printers, it is impoſſible, with any candour, to bring them into the charge of the ſecret ſervice.

The firſt ſum, to the ſolicitor, is given always upon account, viz. for crown proſecutions, and other neceſſary, obvious, and warrantable purpoſes of government, of which the committee themſelves were ſo well aware, that they deducted that ſum from the grand total.

The ſecond ſum, which regards the ſecretaries of ſtate, ſtands juſtly exceptionable in this compariſon, becauſe it was made a diſtinct article from that of ſecret ſervice in all times, and is particularly ſpecified as ſuch in the ſtatement of the annual expenditure before the Revolution, being not included in the annual ſum of £. 89,968. 8 s. 2 ½ d. to

* Faction Detected.

to which the annual average of the ſums employed in ſecret ſervice then amounted. Chapter 6. 1742.

In regard to the charge, that £. 50,077. 18 s. was paid to authors and printers of newſpapers, ſuch as Free Britons, Daily Courants, Corncutter's Journals, Gazetteers, and other political papers, between February 10, 1731, and February 10, 1741, it may be ſufficient to obſerve, with the author of "Faction Detected," that is a matter rather to be laughed at, than conſidered ſeriouſly.* The groſs amount of £. 50,077. 18 s. ſeems a large ſum, but if divided by ten, the number of years, is reduced to only £. 5,007. 15 s. 9 d. per annum, a ſum too trifling to deſerve notice.

If this reaſoning is juſt, and theſe calculations accurate, we muſt deduct from £. 1,453,400, the ſum of 662,781, or the total employed in ſpecial ſervice, and to reimburſe expences, together with the three articles for the ſecretaries of ſtate, the ſolicitor of the treaſury, and the authors and printers; and the remainder, £. 790,619, will be the whole diſburſement for ſecret ſervice from 1731 to 1741. This total, upon a medium of ten years, is only £. 79,061. 18 s. per annum; a much leſs ſum than was expended on the ſame occaſion, during a ſimilar term of years before the Revolution†. And even if the ſums for ſpecial ſervice, and to reimburſe expences, ſhould be included, the amount will then be £. 1,264,250 diſburſed in ten years, or £. 126,425 per annum, which certainly cannot be conſidered as an unreaſonable ſum for keeping the

* Faction Detected, p. 137. † Ibid. p. 134.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. the nation in tranquillity at home, and peace abroad, during a period of very intricate negotiation, conciliating foreign courts, and procuring intelligence, in bounties, penſions during pleaſure, reimburſement of expences, extraordinaries to foreign miniſters, preſents and contingencies at home; and if due conſideration be had to the difference of times of war and peace, to the decreaſe in the value of money, and to the difficulty of procuring exact intelligence, this ſum will not appear comparatively larger than the ſecret ſervice money expended in the reigns of William, Anne, and George the Firſt. It is rather an object of wonder how ſo much could be effected with this money; for no miniſter ſince Walſingham, ever procured ſuch extenſive and accurate intelligence as Sir Robert Walpole.

On reviewing theſe obſervations, we may venture to draw theſe concluſions: That no dependence can be had on the ſtatement of the report; it being unjuſt, partial, and fallacious; that it fully vindicates the character of the miniſter from any charge of peculation, becauſe it ſhews, that notwithſtanding his unpopularity, and the eagerneſs with which his enemies endeavoured to criminate him, no guilt could be proved. The members of the committee, except two, were enemies to Sir Robert Walpole, they were inflamed by party, and goaded by perſonal antipathy; and therefore ſome apology may be made for them, if under the impreſſion of ſuch ſentiments, they gave erroneous ſtatements. But what apology can be made for

thoſe compilers of our hiſtory, who, either ignorant of the true ſtate of the queſtion, or wiſhing to miſlead the reader, have exaggerated even the accounts in the report, and do not bluſh to ſully the pages of hiſtory by aſſerting, that the enormous ſum of £. 1,453,400 was employed in ſecret ſervice money, when even the report makes a different ſtatement, and when the fallacy of ſuch a ſtatement is unqueſtionably proved by the author of Faction Detected, which excellent performance they ought to have ſtudied before they made ſuch unqualified aſſertions. Chapter 61. 1742.

There yet remains one article, too important to be omitted, which proves the malignity or ignorance of the committee.

" We find, moreover, that two days before he reſigned, viz. Feb. 9th, £. 17,461 was paid into his hands by virtue of three warrants, ſigned but the ſame day, which were pawned with the bank officer, in order to raiſe the ſum before they had paſſed through the uſual forms of the exchequer, and till money came into that office, on account of the civil liſt, to redeem them."

This ſtatement carries an appearance of great ignorance in the committee, of the circumſtances attending iſſues of money from the exchequer, or it is an artful colouring of a very common tranſaction, in order to aggravate the ſuppoſed miſconduct of Sir Robert Walpole, for the purpoſe of miſleading the judgment of the public.

The commiſſioners of the treaſury, at all times, have been in the practice of ſigning orders for the iſſue

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. iſſue of money from the exchequer, as well out of the ſupplies, as out of the civil liſt, previous to the actual receipt at the exchequer, of the ſeveral heads of revenue, out of which ſuch orders are thereafter to be diſcharged.*

This uſage is perfectly correct, and really neceſſary, becauſe it enables the payment to be made to the party immediately after the future, or next receipt at the exchequer, which payment, but for this practice, muſt neceſſarily meet with great delay, from the time unavoidably to be taken up in drawing orders at the exchequer, and tranſmitting them for ſignatures and entry at the treaſury.

Monies are very frequently wanted for preſſing ſervices, which require immediate payment, and various means have been deviſed for that purpoſe, long before the revenue, out of which thoſe ſervices are bound to be diſcharged, has found its way into the receipt of exchequer.

The legiſlature annually enables the miniſter to anticipate, by exchequer bills, the iſſues intended to be made out of the land and malt taxes, and the ſurplus of the conſolidated fund.

As the civil-liſt ariſes from a weekly produce, comparatively ſmall, it muſt ſometimes happen that urgent and unforeſeen demands, will unavoidably compel the miniſter, or the creditor, to anticipate the ſum required, by private means, until it can be regularly diſcharged, by due courſe, from the exchequer.

I take

* For the anſwer to this article, I am indebted to Edward Roberts, eſquire, deputy to the clerk of the pells.

I take for granted that from the 8th to the 10th of February, 1741-2, there was, as has often happened, but little money remaining in the exchequer, applicable to the uſes of the civil government, and that the ſum of £.17,461, was immediately wanted, by Sir Robert Walpole, for ſervices which his majeſty muſt certainly have approved of, becauſe he ſigned three ſeparate warrants for the iſſue, as he was entitled by his prerogative to do, and he muſt alſo have given Sir Robert receipts to their amount. Chapter 61. 1742.

Theſe warrants are ſaid to have been *pawned* to the bank officer, in order to raiſe the ſum before they had paſſed through the uſual forms, and till money came into that office, on account of the civil liſt, to redeem them. And here lies the whole giſt of this charge.

Not to dwell on the ill-natured expreſſion of pawned, ſo evidently introduced to heighten the accuſation, or on the good nature of the bank officer, who certainly had no power nor means to accommodate the parties, without the ſpecific and expreſs directions of his ſuperiors, the bank directors then in waiting; what is the fact but ſimply this? that a ſum of money required for his majeſty's ſervice on the 9th of February, and certain of being paid at the exchequer on the 11th, was advanced by the Bank of England on the undeniable ſecurity of the king's ſign manual, the warrant of the commiſſioners of the treaſury, and an exchequer order; the firſt and laſt of theſe inſtruments

Period. VIII. 1742 to 1745. having been regularly counterſigned by the commiſſioners of the treaſury alſo.

Nor could any apprehenſions be entertained that after the miniſter's removal the payment could be ſtopped by thoſe who were to ſucceed him, they having the power of confirming ſuch iſſues as their predeceſſors had directed, but not of annulling them.

Although theſe ſums were procured from the bank, they might have been advanced by a banker, or any other perſons to whom Mr. Scrope or Mr. Stanhope might have thought proper to apply; the tranſaction being moſt undoubtedly a private accommodation, and in no reſpect of an official or public nature.

Sir Robert Walpole himſelf undertook to draw up an anſwer to the report of the ſecret committee, and made ſome progreſs in the work, but he relinquiſhed the buſineſs on a conviction, that the anſwer muſt be either materially defective, or he muſt have related many things highly improper to be expoſed to the public.* Among the Walpole papers is a rough draught in his own hand writing, which appears to have been the commencement of this vindication. It ſtates in a very perſpicuous manner the mode of iſſuing and receiving money at the exchequer, and proves undeniably that a miniſter could never appropriate to his own uſe any part of the ſecret ſervice money, as the rules and forms which conſtitute the law of the exchequer, render it almoſt impoſſible to defraud or

* Etough, from Sir Robert Walpole.

miſapply

misapply any part of the public treasure. Although this document is incomplete, yet it appears too curious a paper to be withheld from the public: it is therefore inserted in the Correspondence. Chapter 61. 1742.

Before I close this review of the report, it will not be improper to make a few observations on the rumours industriously circulated that Sir Robert Walpole gained *enormous* riches from the *plunder* of the public. Vindication of Walpole from the charge of peculation.

The current opinion of his vast wealth was, in some degree, sanctioned by his profuse style of living, and the large sums which he expended at Houghton, in buildings and purchases, which could not amount to less than £. 200,000, and to which it was said the income of his estate, and the known salary of his *visible* employments were manifestly inadequate*.

This

* The confidence and rancour with which these charges were brought forward and supported, will appear from the following extracts, written at different periods:—

"With what face can he say that the minister's estate is no way *exorbitant*, when every body knows he has amassed immense riches, not in the *service of the crown*, but by *jobs, secret service*, the sale of honours, places, pensions, and bargains, made in more places than *Exchange Alley*, by which thousands of families have been reduced to *beggary*."—Examiner, in answer to the Free Briton, July 1, 1731, p. 27.

"That he is the master of the national treasure is evident from his profusion, profusion to which no fund but the exchequer can be sufficient, and of which the income of his estate, and the known salaries of his visible employments, are not equal to the tenth part. His conduct has, indeed, in this respect, been such, that he seems to have thought his triumph not compleat, unless he shewed how little he regarded detection, and how much he despised the resentment of the nation. For this reason he has pleased himself with erecting palaces and extending parks, planting gardens in places to which the very earth was to be transported in carriages, and embracing cascades and fountains whose water was only to be obtained by aqueducts and machines, and imitating the extravagance of oriental monarchs, at the expence of a free

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This heinous charge will be beſt anſwered by a plain ſtatement of his private property, pecuniary acquirements, and the ſituation of his affairs at his death.

His private fortune.

In the firſt chapter of theſe Memoirs, I have ſhewn, from undoubted documents, that his family eſtate, to which he ſucceeded in 1700, amounted to £.2,169 a year, and that it had been relieved from embarraſſments by his wife's fortune. His generous temper, and liberality in promoting the Hanover ſucceſſion, appear to have involved him in his early days in ſome difficulties, from which he was afterwards relieved by the emoluments of the offices which he held under the Whig adminiſtration

free people, whom he has at once impoveriſhed and betrayed." Pulteney's ſpeech for his removal, 1741-2.—Gentleman's Magazine for 1743. p. 175.

1740-1.—" Some people refine ſo much as to think Sir Robert will be glad to make himſelf ſure of his *great fortune*, and quit, if he can have terms that can ſecure." " But if this wonderful thing (the reſignation) ſhould be brought about, Sir Robert will ſtill be behind the curtain, with an immenſe eſtate, and make it very uneaſy to any miniſter."—Ducheſs of Marlborough's Opinions, p. 109. On this ſubject the editor juſtly obſerves, " The *vaſt wealth* of Sir Robert Walpole was, I remember, the cry of the day; and it ſeemed as if he had purchaſed moſt of the county of Norfolk, and poſſeſſed one-half, at leaſt, of the ſtock of the bank of England. He himſelf ſaid, in a familiar way, " People call me rich, but my brother will *cut up* better."

" Taken up near Arlington-ſtreet, a ſmall memorandum book (ſuppoſed to be loſt by a gentlemen who is packing up his awls) conſiſting of ſeveral articles, particularly the following ones:—Settled on my eldeſt ſon, upon his marriage £.7,000 per annum. Item—Expended on my houſe in N———, and in pictures £.150,000. Item—On plate and jewels, very proper for concealment, in caſe of an im———t, £.160,000. Item—In houſe-keeping, for ſix years paſt, at a moderate computation, £.150,000. Item—Remitted at ſeveral times, within theſe twelve months laſt paſt, to the banks of Amſterdam, Venice, and Genoa, £.400,000; with many other particulars, too tedious here to relate. If the gentleman who loſt it, will pleaſe to apply himſelf to Caleb D'Anvers, of Gray's Inn, Eſq.; the ſaid memorandum book ſhall be reſtored gratis."—Advertiſement in the Craftſman of November 28, 1730.

" Sir Robert is gone to day to his country-ſeat, *loaded with the ſpoils* and the hatred of the public," Cheſterfield's Letters to his Son.

tion in the reign of queen Anne, and while pay-maſter general of the forces in the reign of George the Firſt. But he greatly augmented his fortune by diſpoſing of South Sea ſtock. He was, however, principally indebted for this acquiſition to his own ſagacity, and to the judgment and intelligence of his agents, Jacombe and Gibſon; for he was ſo far from being entruſted with the ſecrets of the managers, that he was execrated by them for having uniformly oppoſed the project, and favoured the propoſal of the bank. His good fortune, however, was ſtill greater than his own diſcernment or the intelligence of his agents, for he narrowly eſcaped being a great ſufferer in the laſt ſubſcription, by the precipitate fall of the ſtock. Some orders which he had ſent from Houghton, by Sir Harry Bedingfield, together with a liſt of his friends who wiſhed to be ſubſcribers, came too late to be executed; and the delay prevented his participating in the general calamity *.

This

* Jacombe to Walpole, Aug. 27, 1720. Orford Papers.

Walpole was not only himſelf a conſiderable gainer by diſpoſing of his property in the South Sea ſtock, but he was alſo the cauſe that the earl of Pembroke derived the ſame advantage. That nobleman having requeſted his advice, as a perſon well verſed in affairs of finance, whether he ſhould ſell out a large ſum, or wait till another opportunity? Walpole anſwered, "I will only acquaint you with what I have done myſelf, I have juſt ſold out at £.1,000 per cent. and I am fully ſatisfied." The earl of Pembroke ſaid nothing, and retired. Some years afterwards there arrived at Houghton, a fine bronze caſt of the celebrated ſtatue of the Gladiator at Rome, it was a preſent from lord Pembroke, as a teſtimony of gratitude for this advice, which he had followed, and by which he had ſecured a very large part of his property.

Mrs. Walpole, however, did not pay ſo much regard to the opinion of her huſband, for ſhe was ſo much infected with the general frenzy, that in oppoſition to his repeated advice, ſhe retained a ſum of money, which ſhe poſſeſſed in her own right, in the South Sea funds, and ſuffered, by her obſtinacy, in common with the other loſers. Theſe anecdotes were communicated by lord Orford.

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This addition ſo conſiderably increaſed his revenue as ſufficiently to account for his expence in building, improving, and purchaſing at Houghton, which he commenced in the following year, as well as for the acquiſition of that noble collection of pictures which coſt him £.40,000, and which ſold for nearly double the original price*.

During his continuance in office, he provided for his family by lucrative offices for life†. Thus he

* The deareſt picture in his collection, the "Doctors," by Guido, did not coſt more than £.630.

† Places of truſt and profit held by Sir Robert Walpole:

June, 1705. One of the council to the lord high admiral.
1708. Secretary at war.
Jan. 21, Treaſurer to the navy.
Oct. 5, 1714. Paymaſter of the forces.
Oct. 11, 1715. Firſt lord commiſſioner of the treaſury, chancellor, and under treaſurer of the exchequer.
June 11, 1720. Paymaſter of the forces.
April 3, 1721. Firſt lord commiſſioner of the treaſury.
May 29, 1723. Secretary of ſtate, during the king's abſence.
May 7, 1740. Joint ranger of Richmond park.

Places held by or for the family of Sir Robert Walpole:

1721. Collector of the port of London, by Henry Hare and Robert Mann, during the lives of Robert Walpole, junior, and E. Walpole, junior, Eſquires, ſons of Sir Robert Walpole. The reverſion of this place was granted on the 28th June 1716, and came into poſſeſſion in 1721. It was held by deed of truſt, at the diſpoſal of Sir Robert Walpole — — £. 2,000 per Annum.

April 5, 1721. Robert Walpole, junior, clerk of the pells - - - - 3,000

July 21, 1725. Robert lord Walpole, ranger of Richmond Park.

Nov. 17, 1727. E. Walpole, clerk of the pleas in in the court of exchequer - 400
——— ſecretary to the treaſury.
——— to the duke of Devonſhire, as lord lieutenant.

Feb. 4, 1737. H. Walpole, junior, uſher of the receipt of the exchequer - 2,000

Nov. 9.

he was enabled to expend his private fortune, conſiderably increaſed by the riſe of landed property,* and his miniſterial emoluments, in that profuſe ſtyle of living which incurred ſuch unqualified cenſure.

Theſe details of the eſtate and property of Sir Robert Walpole, cannot be deemed ſuperfluous, when it is conſidered that he has been repreſented as a needy adventurer; that he was accuſed of having ſquandered and appropriated the public money; an accuſation which was advanced without proof, believed without conviction, and is ſtill credited by many who take rumours for facts, and give unlimited faith to the rancorous aſſertions of party.

Nov. 9,	1738.	H. Walpole, junior, comptroller of the great roll - -	500 per Annum.
Nov. 1.	1738.	——— clerk or keeper of the foreign eſtreats - -	
May 9,	1739.	Robert lord Walpole, auditor of the exchequer - - -	7,000
		Edward Walpole, clerk of the pells, on the ſurrender of Robert lord Walpole.	

The fortune of Edward Walpole was only £.6,000, which he never received; that of his ſon Horace £.4,000, which was not paid till 40 years after the death of his father. The late lord Orford alſo aſſured me, that he never received more than £.200 from his father.

* The rental of his family eſtate, which in 1700 amounted to £.2,160 a year, could not be leſs at his reſignation than between 4 and £.5,000 a year.

CHAPTER THE SIXTY-SECOND:

1743—1745.

Renewal of the parliamentary Attack on Lord Orford—Defeated.—Conſulted by the King.—His Influence in miniſterial Arrangements.—Exerts himſelf for the Continuance of Hanoverian Troops in the Britiſh Pay.—His Speech in the Houſe of Lords.—Goes to Houghton.—Returns to London at the King's Requeſt.—Illneſs.—Death.

Orford retires to Houghton.

THE indemnity bill being rejected, the ex-miniſter retired to Houghton, and did not return to London till the next ſeſſion of parliament, in the public buſineſs of which he took no active ſhare.

Returns to London.

Soon after his return to London, he experienced the inveteracy of thoſe opponents who had not been gratified with places in the new arrangements.

Motion againſt him revived.

Dec. 1.

Waller revived the motion for appointing a committee to inquire into the conduct of Robert earl of Orford, during the laſt ten years of his being firſt commiſſioner of the treaſury, and chancellor and under treaſurer of the exchequer. He was ſeconded by Sir Watkin Williams Wynne. Although it is ſaid that a debate took place on the ſubject, I cannot find any account of it in the periodical publications of the times, which plainly indicates that the clamours which had been raiſed againſt the ex-miniſter no longer engaged the popular attention. A contemporary hiſtorian only obſerves on this occaſion, "This motion was plainly

plainly calculated to render the oppoſers of it odious; but the aim was in a great meaſure loſt. The ſum of the inquiry into the earl's domeſtic management, had fallen far ſhort of the public expectation, and the parliament was poſſeſſed of all the papers that could give the neceſſary lights for an inquiry into his foreign conduct. The motion, therefore, was treated as tending to divert the attention of the houſe from the great affairs of government, and upon a diviſion, was rejected by 253 againſt 186." * Chapter 62. 1743 to 1745. Rejected.

The ex-miniſter ſeems to have felt theſe repeated aggreſſions with offended ſenſibility, and juſt indignation. In a fragment which formed part of an intended vindication of his conduct with reſpect to the charge of peculation, he thus animadverts on this unrelenting ſpirit: Orford's reflections.

" What then ſhall be ſaid of theſe wicked outcries and clamours, which have ſo long filled and diſtracted the nation, of public robbers, plunderers of the public, miniſters enriching themſelves with the ſpoils of the people, and all that infamous weight of calumny, detraction, and defamation, with which the patriots have loaded the ſervants of the crown, have inflamed the minds of the populace, and for which we are told the nation are in the higheſt expectation of obtaining national juſtice. I think offenders of this ſort, if any ſuch there be, are proper objects of parliamentary juſtice, but if none ſuch are to be found, what curſe is not due to the authors of theſe deteſtable practices! And

* Tindal, vol. 20. p. 607. Journals.

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I think the vengeance of the people ought to be ſatisfied either upon the delinquents, if any crimes can be proved, or upon the inventors of ſuch ſcandalous reports, who have ſo vilely impoſed upon, and deluded the people. This is common juſtice; but to that height of impudence are ſome men now come, as avowedly to declare it is neceſſary that even injuſtice ſhould be done, to anſwer the unjuſt expectations which they themſelves have raiſed in the kingdom." *

Conſulted by the king.

The king had, from long experience, conceived ſo high an opinion of Walpole's zeal and judgment, that he conſulted him in matters of great emergency. It does not appear that any perſonal conferences took place, but his advice was ſometimes communicated by the duke of Devonſhire, and lord Cholmondeley, ſometimes by colonel Selwyn †, and Ranby ſurgeon to the houſehold. The letters which he wrote on theſe occaſions were always returned by the king, who was ſcrupulouſly delicate in never retaining any papers of ſuch a nature, from apprehenſions that ill conſequences might reſult from their future diſcovery. He was led to adopt this practice in conſequence of finding, among the papers of George the Firſt, ſome letters from Sunderland, that betrayed political ſecrets which ought never to have been revealed. ‡

Another

* Correſpondence.

† Colonel John Selwyn, aid de camp to the duke of Marlborough, colonel of the third regiment of foot, groom of the bedchamber to George the Second, treaſurer to queen Caroline, and afterwards treaſurer to his preſent majeſty George the Third, when prince of Wales.

‡ From lord Orford.

Another mode of communication was through the king's confidential page of the back ſtairs, who uſed to meet the earl of Orford at the houſe of Mr. Fowle, in Golden-ſquare, who had married his niece, and whom he had made commiſſioner of the exciſe. This meeting took place in the evening; ſometimes as late as midnight. The earl of Orford uſed to come firſt; the daughters were previouſly ordered to retire, and the ſervants were ſent from home under various pretences. The young ladies were inſtigated by curioſity to watch at the top of the ſtairs. The houſe door was opened by Mr. Fowle himſelf, a chair was admitted into the hall, and a little man came out, and went up ſtairs into the drawing-room, where he remained ſome time with the earl of Orford, and went away in the ſame myſterious manner.* This man was probably Livry the king's confidential page, the ſame who more than once paid ſimilar viſits to the earl of Bath.†

By means of this intercourſe, he induced the king to raiſe Pelham to the head of the treaſury, and to exclude the earl of Bath.

Wilmington being in a declining ſtate of health on the king's departure for Hanover in 1743, it was expected that his death would happen before his return; and it was feared a conteſt would take place between the two parties in the cabinet, for the firſt ſeat at the treaſury board. Orford well knew that Carteret, who was to accompany the king abroad,

Aſſiſts in the promotion of Pelham.

* Family Anecdote. † From the biſhop of Saliſbury.

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abroad, would further the views of lord Bath, or attempt to place himſelf in that ſtation. He, therefore, earneſtly exhorted Pelham, who had always proved himſelf his ſtedfaſt friend, to apply for it before the vacancy. Pelham for ſome time declined taking that ſtep; and was not prevailed on till after repeated importunities, and probably inſinuations from the earl of Orford, that his ſolicitation alone was neceſſary to inſure ſucceſs. Pelham at length applied, and obtained a poſitive promiſe from the king.

Struggle in the cabinet.

While this buſineſs was in agitation, a counter intrigue took place.

Lord Bath had from experience ſeen his error in ſuppoſing that he could direct public meaſures without holding an oſtenſible place. He felt that he was a cabinet counſellor without influence, and that few of thoſe who owed their appointments or continuance in office to him, ſhewed any gratitude or deference to their benefactor. He had declined ſucceeding Sir Robert Walpole in 1742, becauſe he had repeatedly declared, both in parliament and in political publications, that he never would accept any place. But he was now induced to admit that a reſolution thrown out in the ardour of debate, or advanced in party pamphlets, might be broken without ſubjecting himſelf to the charge of inconſiſtency; yet he did not adopt this reſolution without ſome ſtruggle.

All the members of the treaſury board entreated lord Bath to place himſelf at their head, when the vacancy ſhould happen, as the only meaſure which could

could prevent the ruin of their party. But their representations were ineffectual; he refuſed to make any application before the death of Wilmington. On that event, which happened on the 2d of July, they renewed their ſolicitations, and at length overcame his reluctance. Lord Bath announced to Carteret, the united wiſhes of the whole treaſury board, expreſſed his acquieſcence, and requeſted the place. Sir John Ruſhout ſent his own valet de chambre, John George, expreſs to Germany with the diſpatch.* The meſſenger was detained ſix weeks at Hanau, where the king was engaged in negotiating the treaty of Worms. At length no other anſwer was returned, than that the king's determination would be ſignified by the duke of Newcaſtle.

About the ſame time that this intimation was brought, a meſſenger came from lord Carteret, announcing the appointment of Pelham to the vacant place at the head of the treaſury. This intelligence ſo greatly ſurpriſed the duke of Newcaſtle, that in a letter to the lord chancellor, who was then in the country, he expreſſes himſelf with marks of no leſs aſtoniſhment than ſatisfaction; boaſts of the victory over Carteret, extols the king's firmneſs, but acknowledges his inability to aſcertain the cauſes of this fortunate event.†

Pelham firſt lord of the treaſury.

Auguſt 23.

The myſtery of this tranſaction was ſo impenetrable to both parties, that while Newcaſtle appeared

* From the biſhop of Saliſbury, communicated by Sir John Ruſhout.

† Auguſt 1743. Hardwicke Papers.

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peared to be at a loſs by what means the influence of Carteret had been defeated, lord Bath ſuſpected that he was betrayed by Carteret. But it is more than probable, that before the return of Ruſhout's meſſenger, the king had conſulted the earl of Orford, who ſtrongly diſſuaded the acceptance of his rival's offer, and enforced the king's adherence to his promiſe in favour of Pelham.

Lord Cholmondeley privy ſeal.

Another ſtrong proof of the king's perſonal conſideration for the fallen miniſter, appeared in December. When lord Gower reſigned the privy ſeal, Sir John Ruſhout again preſſed lord Bath to come into office by accepting that place. He thought that he had prevailed on him, and deſired lord Carteret to mention it to the king. But lord Bath, inſtead of applying for it himſelf, in an audience warmly recommended the earl of Carliſle, * who thought himſelf ſo ſecure of ſucceſs, that he received the compliments of his friends. The king, however, declined this requeſt, and inſtantly nominated lord Cholmondeley, the ſon-in-law to the earl of Orford.

Other changes.

The aſcendancy of his intereſt, and the decline of Bath's credit, became daily more manifeſt. When Ruſhout was made treaſurer of the navy, his place at the treaſury board was filled by Henry Fox, the inalienable adherent of Orford; and when Sandys was created a peer, and made cofferer of the houſehold, Pelham united in himſelf the offices of firſt lord of the treaſury and chancellor of the exchequer.

Popular diſcontents.

When Orford arrived in London, before the opening of the ſeſſion, he found the nation in an alarming

* From the biſhop of Saliſbury.

alarming ferment, and the moſt inveterate diviſions in the cabinet between the parties of Carteret and Newcaſtle. George the Second was extremely unpopular. His partiality to the electorate, and rumours of his preferring the Hanoverian to the Britiſh forces, occaſioned clamours no leſs general and vehement, than thoſe excited againſt William for favouring the Dutch. The toaſt of "no Hanoverian king," was not unfrequently given in large companies; and the very name of a Hanoverian became a term of diſgrace and obloquy. The popular outcry, that England was involved in a war with France, for the ſupport of German meaſures, oppoſite to her real intereſts, was now as violent againſt Carteret, as the complaints which had been urged againſt Walpole for tameneſs and puſillanimity, and baſe ſubmiſſion to the dictates of France.

Outcry againſt Hanover Troops.

Not only the members in oppoſition decried the king's partiality, and oppoſed the continuance of the Hanoverian troops in Britiſh pay, but the leading members of the cabinet diſplayed equal repugnance. Newcaſtle was violent on this head, and after enforcing the neceſſity of their diſmiſſion, ſtigmatiſed them by the appellation of a "body of troops, whoſe views have directed our motions, and whoſe fears have checked our victories." *

In the midſt of theſe popular clamours and miniſterial invectives, the king returned from the continent, and Carteret found a large majority of the cabinet

* The duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, November 7, 1743. Hardwicke Papers.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. cabinet determined to oppoſe the continuance of the Hanoverian troops. Notwithſtanding the indignity to the king, and chagrin to himſelf, which muſt reſult from this determination, he was compelled to acquieſce. The queſtion was therefore abandoned, and the cabinet engaged in forming other expedients.

Exertions of Orford.

The arrival of Orford at this juncture, gave a new aſpect to the tranſactions of the miniſtry. He wholly diſapproved the conduct of the war, which had made England the principal inſtead of an auxiliary on the continent; he had reprobated the military proceedings in Flanders, which he properly aſcribed to the fervour of Newcaſtle, eager for continental victories, and the ſubſervience of Carteret to the king's views. But the evil could not now be remedied. He deprecated therefore ſo groſs an inſult to the king, without benefit to the nation. He was aware that if theſe troops were diſcharged, others muſt be ſubſtituted, which in the actual ſtate of Europe could not eaſily be found, and if found would not be attended with leſs expence. He inſtantly remonſtrated with Pelham, and the other members of the cabinet over whom he retained any influence, againſt the dereliction of the meaſure, expoſed the puſillanimity of yielding to popular outcry and exaggerated rumours; and he offered to frame the queſtion in ſuch a manner as ſhould render it palatable, and facilitate its adoption.

He never laboured any point during his own adminiſtration with more zeal; he employed that

perſonal credit and faſcinating influence which he poſſeſſed in ſo eminent a degree over his friends. At his requeſt, a dinner was arranged at Mr. Hanbury Williams's, where he met thoſe members of the cabinet, and a few leading men of both houſes, who were averſe to the meaſure. He enforced, with ſo much energy, the neceſſity of renewing the queſtion, notwithſtanding the occurrences of the campaign, that he finally brought them over to his opinion. In fact, it was *ſolely* owing to his exertions, that the meaſure was not abandoned. He did not himſelf ſupport it by his eloquence in the houſe of peers, but his brother Horace defended it in the commons with great ability and ſtrength of argument; at the ſame time he accompanied his defence with ſo many ſarcaſtic alluſions to the weakneſs and ſubſerviency of the cabinet, as to demonſtrate that he acted from no impulſe, but that internal conviction which flowed from his own experience and his brother's ſuggeſtions.*

Hanover troops continued.

The earl of Orford, after his reſignation, had ſeldom appeared in the houſe of lords, and ſeldomer ſpoke, having obſerved to his brother Horace, that he had left his tongue in the houſe of commons. On one occaſion, however, he ſhewed that he ſtill retained his former powers of eloquence. He had given miniſters repeated information of the hoſtile deſigns of France, to invade this country in ſupport of the Pretender; but his intelligence had been diſregarded and ridiculed as the effuſions of diſcontent,

* Lord Hardwicke's Parliamentary Journal. Debrett's Debates.

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tent, and the remains of thoſe apprehenſions of Jacobitiſm which had been conſidered by his enemies as artifices to keep the nation in continual ſuſpenſe and alarm. It appeared, however, that his intelligence was well founded.

King's meſſage.

On the 18th of February the king ſent a meſſage to both houſes, acquainting them that he had received undoubted information, that the eldeſt ſon of the Pretender to his crown was arrived at Paris, who, in concert with ſome of his diſaffected ſubjects, was preparing to make an invaſion, and was to be ſupported by the French fleet then in the channel; and adding, that he did not doubt their concurrence in proper meaſures to defeat the deſign. Accordingly, both houſes joined in an addreſs, expreſſing the warmeſt zeal and unanimity, and ſignifying that they would, at the hazard of their lives and fortunes, ſupport his right and title to the kingdom in oppoſition to, and defiance of the Pretender and his adherents, and all other enemies.*

Papers communicated.

On the 28th of February, Newcaſtle, by order of the king, laid before the houſe of lords, ſome letters and papers containing farther intelligence concerning the intended invaſion from France; he concluded by obſerving, that their lordſhips having already expreſſed, in the addreſs of laſt week, their indignation at ſo daring and inſolent an attempt, and their reſolution to ſupport his majeſty againſt the Pretender and his adherents, he did not think it

* Debrett's Parliamentary Debates from 1743 to 1745, vol. 1. p. 172.

it poſſible to find words more expreſſive of zeal and duty, than were choſen on that occaſion, and with which the king was ſo much ſatisfied, that he had been pleaſed to declare his confidence in their vigour and unanimity.* Chapter 62. 1743 to 1745.

At the concluſion of his ſpeech, the houſe ordered counſel to be heard in a private cauſe, when Orford roſe from his ſeat, and with no leſs animation than dignity, obſerved, that he had made a reſolution of never troubling the houſe, and that it was not without a very uncommon degree of grief he found it now indiſpenſably neceſſary to break that reſolution, ſo neceſſary, that he could not, in his opinion, continue ſilent without a crime. Speech of Orford.

"I ſincerely wiſh," he ſaid, "that my former apprehenſions concerning France and the Pretender, for which I have been ſo often and ſo ſeverely ridiculed, had not been ſo often and ſo fully verified. But I could not eaſily have believed, that it could ever have been neceſſary for me to ſpeak on an occaſion like this; that it could ever have fallen to my lot to remind your lordſhips of the reſpect due to the perſon of our ſovereign; I could not eaſily have believed, nor could I have imagined, that the common forms of decency could have been violated in this auguſt aſſembly. It is with the greateſt emotion and ſurpriſe that I ſee ſuch a neglect of duty. My knowledge of your lordſhips, will not ſuffer me to term it by any harſher name than that of forgetfulneſs; but ſuch forget-

* Debrett.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. forgetfulneſs I have never known in my long acquaintance with parliamentary proceedings.

" When his majeſty has communicated to your lordſhips intelligence of the higheſt importance, is he to receive no anſwer from the houſe? Is his intimation to be paſſed over without ceremony and without regard? Such behaviour muſt doubtleſs ariſe from inconſiderateneſs, for the leaſt reflection will ſhow that it is not eaſy to treat our ſovereign with leſs reſpect. A little recollection, my lords, will ſoon convince you, that when his majeſty's care and penetration have been employed for the ſecurity of the public happineſs, when, as he promiſed, he has endeavoured to obtain a more exact account of the pernicious deſigns of France; when he has made ſome further diſcoveries of them, and has ſhewn his regard for our counſels, by imparting them to us; can we be ſo undutiful, ſo indecent, as not to return an addreſs of thanks? If we do not, how will it appear that we have received them? For this reaſon, if for no other, the noble duke ought, in my humble opinion, to have made ſome motion for that purpoſe. And certainly, my lords, our language is not ſo barren that we cannot find words to expreſs our duty on every occaſion, and teſtify our acknowledgments for every inſtance of regard ſhown us by our ſovereign; and although an addreſs may appear to ſome a repetition of that which has been lately preſented, yet I cannot think it an unreaſonable or a ſuperfluous repetition.

" As

" As ſuch treatment my lords, has never been deſerved by his majeſty, ſo it has never before been practiſed. And ſure, my lords, if his hereditary council ſhould ſelect, for ſuch an inſtance of diſreſpect, a time of diſtraction and confuſion; a time when the greateſt power in Europe is ſetting up a Pretender to his throne, and when only the winds have hindered an attempt to invade his dominions; it may give our enemies occaſion to imagine and report, that we have loſt all veneration for the perſon of our ſovereign. Chapter 62. 1743 to 1745.

" I have, indeed, particular reaſon to expreſs my aſtoniſhment and my uneaſineſs on this occaſion; I feel my breaſt fired with the warmeſt gratitude to a gracious and royal maſter, whom I have ſo long ſerved; my heart overflows with zeal for his honour, and ardour for the laſting ſecurity of his illuſtrious houſe. But, my lords, the danger is common, and an invaſion equally involves all our happineſs, all our hopes, and all our fortunes.

" It cannot he thought conſiſtent with the wiſdom of your lordſhips, to be employed in determining private property, when ſo weighty an affair as the ſecurity of the whole kingdom demands your attention; when it is not known but at this inſtant the enemy has ſet foot on our coaſts, is ravaging our country with fire and ſword, and threatening us with no leſs than extirpation or ſervitude.

" If you neglect the public ſecurity, if you ſuffer the declared enemies of your name to proceed in their deſigns without reſiſtance, where will be your dignities,

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dignities, your honours, and your liberties? You will then boaſt no more of the high prerogatives of your houſe, your freedom of ſpeech, and ſhare in the legiſlature. If the enemy, my lords, ſhould obtain ſucceſs, that ſucceſs which they apparently expect, and which yet they would not hope, without ſome proſpect of being joined by the diſaffected part of our own countrymen, the conſequence muſt be, that the perſon whom they would place on the throne, would retain only the ſhadow of a ſovereign; he would be no other than a vice-roy to the French king; and your lordſhips, who now ſit in this houſe with a dignity envied by every claſs of nobility in the world, would then be no better than the ſlaves of a ſlave to an ambitious, arbitrary tyrant.

"Pardon me, my lords, if a zeal for his majeſty, for your honour and dignities, and the ſafety of the nation, fires me with uncommon ardour. Permit me to rouſe you from this lethargy, and let it not be ſaid, that you ſuffer any diſregard to be ſhewn to intimations thus important; intimations ſent by his majeſty, and which relate to nothing leſs than the preſervation of the kingdom. I hope, therefore, before you proceed to call in the counſel for a private cauſe, you will ſhew ſo much regard to the great, the univerſal, the national intereſt, as to concert a proper form of addreſs to his majeſty, that he may not appear labouring for our ſafety, while we ourſelves neglect it." *

It

* The earl of Hardwicke's manuſcript journal of remarkable debates. Debrett's Debates, vol. 1. p. 177.

It is obſerved by a perſon who was preſent at the time, * that he ſpoke this ſpeech with an emotion and ſpirit which ſhewed that it was quite unpremeditated, and came from his heart. It had an immediate effect; the whole houſe ſaw the impropriety of the proceeding. The miniſter confeſſed his inattention, though in a tone and manner, and with ſuch expreſſions, as ſhewed that he was ſtung with the remark. An addreſs was drawn up by the chancellor, ſimilar to that which had paſſed on the 18th, and was unanimouſly approved. The prince of Wales, ſtruck with this well-timed effuſion of loyalty, quitted his ſeat, and taking lord Orford by the hand, expreſſed his grateful acknowledgments. As a teſtimony of his ſatisfaction, he revoked the prohibition which prevented the family of lord Orford from attending his levee. †

Addreſs to the king.

Satisfaction of the prince of Wales.

At the cloſe of the ſeſſion, Orford retired as uſual to Houghton, where he remained under the tortures of a nephritic complaint, till he received a ſummons from the king to return to London.

Orford goes to Houghton.

At this time the king was exceedingly diſtreſſed and embarraſſed; he was divided between his inclination for Carteret, and his inability of carrying, without the aſſiſtance of the Pelhams, through both houſes, the favourite meaſure of proſecuting the war with vigour in Flanders. Ever ſince the reſignation of Walpole, who had cemented the bond of union which kept the heterogeneous parts together, and gave ſtrength to the executive government,

Diſtreſs of the king.

* The late earl of Hardwicke.

† From lord Orford.

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vernment, the adminiſtration had been weak and diſjointed. There was no one perſon whoſe aſcendancy in the cloſet, influence in parliament, and pre-eminence of talents, enabled him to take a decided lead in the cabinet. Great diviſions had taken place, and given riſe to a long ſeries of cabals, between Newcaſtle and Carteret, which if not ſuppreſſed or moderated, threatened ruin both to the domeſtic and foreign affairs. Theſe feuds had ariſen to a height ſo alarming, as to neceſſitate the removal of one of the contending parties.

Feuds in the cabinet.

Struggle between Newcaſtle and Carteret.

Carteret, who on the recent death of his mother, had ſucceeded to the earldom of Granville, was ſtrenuouſly ſupported by the king, but the party of Newcaſtle preponderated both in the cabinet and in parliament. It became a great object of both parties to ſecure the intereſt of lord Orford, as well from the conſideration paid to his advice by the king, as from the number of members in both houſes whom he directed or influenced. In conformity with this view, Newcaſtle obſerves, in a letter to the chancellor, "It is neceſſary to find means of ſatisfying lord Orford, and a certain number of his friends; for without this laſt, we have no ground to ſtand on, and ſhall, I fear, be obliged to ſhew in a few months that we have not ſtrength enough to ſupport the king's affairs, though he ſhould put them into our hands." *

Orford ſent for by the king.

Granville adopted, as he thought, a ſurer method, which was to employ the influence of the king. By

* Duke of Newcaſtle to lord Hardwicke, November 10, 1744. Hardwicke Papers.

By his majeſty's command, lord Cholmondeley wrote to his father-in-law. He informed him that the king, after many gracious expreſſions and acknowledgments of his ſervice, in regard to the queſtion for the continuance of the Hanover forces, requeſted his attendance a week or ten days before the meeting of parliament. The long experience, he ſaid, of his zeal and attachment, the knowledge of his conſummate judgment in domeſtic affairs, the conſciouſneſs of the great weight of his opinion and influence over ſo many members in both houſes of parliament, induced the king to require his advice and concurrence in ſubjects of the higheſt importance, at this critical juncture. Chapter 62. 1743 to 1745.

The anſwer was couched in the moſt reſpectful terms of duty and zeal. After ſaying, that as the care and ſtudy of his life, while he had the honour to ſerve the king, had been directed to deſerve his favour and good opinion, ſo he ſhould ſtill, in a private capacity, perſevere in his endeavours to merit the continuance of his majeſty's grace and goodneſs, the only reward he had now to aſk for all paſt or future ſervices. He expreſſed his intention of obeying the king's commands by ſetting out for London, as ſoon as his health would permit. He hoped to arrive there before the meeting of parliament was ſettled, and the buſineſs finally adjuſted, till which time, he could be of no uſe in recommending the meaſures to ſuch perſons as paid any regard to his opinion. With reſpect to the conduct of affairs, he declined entering into any previous conſultation, and yet ventured, with His anſwer.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. his uſual frankneſs, to give a decided diſapprobation to the ſyſtem of continental politics which had been recently purſued. He obſerved, "I am heartily ſorry to ſee the king's affairs reduced to ſuch extremities. It has been a long time eaſy to foreſee the unavoidable, and almoſt unſurmountable difficulties that would attend the preſent ſyſtem of politics. I wiſh to God it was as eaſy to ſhow the way out of them. But be aſſured, that I will in every thing, to the utmoſt of my power, conſult and contribute to the honour, intereſt, and ſafety of the king and kingdom." * In reply, lord Cholmondeley expreſſed the king's cordiality and ſatisfaction, and enforced the neceſſity of his immediate appearance, if it could be done without injury to his health.

Arrival in London.

In this ſituation of affairs he was requeſted by Pelham, and adviſed by his brother Horace, who ſuggeſted that it was a manœuvre of Granville, to delay his journey, as on his arrival he would be embarraſſed between the choice of two contending parties, and might not be able to act without offending the king. Yet although the ſtate of his health was fully ſufficient to juſtify his continuance in the country, he thought it his duty to obey the ſummons of the king; and left Houghton on the 19th of November. On his arrival in London, he found the whole arrangement finally ſettled, without any occaſion

* The earl of Orford to lord Cholmondeley, November 17, 1744. Correſpondence.

occaſion for his concurrence. The Pelhams had formed a coalition with the prince's friends, the Tories and oppoſition Whigs, which was ludicrouſly called the *Broad Bottom*. Granville had been compelled to reſign, but carried with him the regret of the king, and ſtrong aſſurances of future favour. Harrington ſucceeded him as ſecretary of ſtate. Chapter 62. 1743 to 1745.

But the ſmiles or frowns of ſovereigns, the petty intrigues of courts, the bickerings of diſcordant politics, and the arrangement of a new adminiſtration, were no longer objects of Orford's attention. Illneſs.

He had long been afflicted with the ſtone. The journey from Houghton, which he employed four days in performing, aggravated the ſymptoms, and brought on ſuch excruciating torments, that the deſcription of his ſufferings, during the laſt day's journey, which was only twenty miles, filled Ranby * himſelf with horror. Not finding the expected relief from regular medical aſſiſtance, he had recourſe to Dr. Jurin, who adminiſtered a powerful ſolvent, which, contrary to the advice of his friends, the patient repeatedly took in large quantities. The medicine diſſolved the ſtone, but the violence of its operation lacerated the bladder, and occaſioned the moſt excruciating agonies. His only relief was opium, and from an apprehenſion of returning pain, he took ſuch large and repeated doſes, that for ſix week he was almoſt in a conſtant ſtate of ſtupefaction, except for two or three hours in the Sufferings.

* Ranby's Narrative.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. the afternoon, when he ſeemed to rouſe from his lethargy, and converſe with his uſual vivacity and cheerfulneſs.

Conſulted by the duke of Cumberland. A few days before he died, he gave an inſtance that his judgment was ſound and unimpaired. The duke of Cumberland having ineffectually remonſtrated with the king againſt a marriage with the princeſs of Denmark, who was deformed, ſent his governor, Mr. Poyntz, to conſult the earl of Orford, on the beſt methods which he could adopt to avoid the match. After a moment's reflection, Orford adviſed him to give his conſent to the marriage, on condition of receiving an ample and immediate eſtabliſhment, "and believe me," he added, "when I ſay, that the match will be no longer preſſed." The duke followed his advice, and the event happened as the dying ſtateſman had foretold.*

Fortitude. He bore his ſufferings with unexampled fortitude and reſignation.

Ranby, his ſurgeon, who publiſhed a narrative of his laſt illneſs, thus expreſſes himſelf: "When I recollect his reſigned behaviour, under the moſt excruciating pains, the magnanimous ſentiments which filled his ſoul, when on the eve, ſeemingly, of diſſolution, and call to mind the exalted expreſſions that were continually flowing from him at this ſevere time of trial; however extraordinary his natural talents, or acquired abilities were; however he had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his eloquence in the ſenate, or by his ſingular judgment and depth of

* From lord Orford.

of penetration in counſels; this incomparable conſtancy and aſtoniſhing preſence of mind, muſt raiſe in my opinion as ſublime ideas of him, as any act of his life beſides, however good and popular; and reflect a renown on his name, equal to that which conſecrates the memory of the remarkable ſages of antiquity." Chapter 62. 1743 to 1745.

He expired * on the 18th of March 1745, in the ſixty-ninth year of his age. His remains were interred in the pariſh church at Houghton, without monument or inſcription: Death.

" So peaceful reſts without a ſtone, a name
" Which once had " honours," titles, wealth, and fame." †

CHAPTER THE SIXTY-THIRD:

Principles of Walpole's Adminiſtration.—Pacific Syſtem.—Finance.—Commerce.—Public Character.

THE character of a Miniſter is to be traced from the hiſtory of his whole adminiſtration Candour therefore requires that we ſhould not judge by the ſelection of detached parts, but combine the whole in a connective ſeries, and referring his conduct to one grand principle of action, judge of it as critics do of an epic poem, by comprehending, in one point of view, the beginning, the middle, and the end.

Did

* An account of his family and deſcendants is given in the genealogical table, vol. i. chap. 1.

† Pope.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. General principle.

Did the adminiſtration of Walpole preſent any uniform principle, which may be traced in every part, and gave combination and conſiſtency to the whole?—Yes.—And that principle was THE LOVE OF PEACE,

Preventive meaſures.

The great leading features of this pacific ſyſtem, are thus delineated by himſelf:

" To prevent a war, and to take the proper ſteps, that may not only keep us out of the war, but enable us to contribute towards reſtoring the public tranquillity, is no leſs deſirable, and a conduct no leſs juſtifiable, than to carry on and ſupport a war we are unhappily engaged in. If then *paries cum proximus ardet*, it is as adviſable to look after ourſelves, and to prevent the flames reaching our houſes, as it would be to extinguiſh a fire already kindled; and if to prevent, and by proper care to avoid a cold or a fever, be eaſier, ſafer, and wiſer, than to cure the diſtemper, I may venture to maintain, that meaſures tending to prevent a war, or that are preparatory to the carrying it on, if it becomes unavoidable, are as juſtifiable and as reaſonable, if neceſſary, as the ſame meaſures would be in caſe of an actual war." *

This ſame ſyſtem is alſo fully developed by Horace Walpole.

" This ſalutary plan of *preventive and defenſive meaſures*, has been the fundamental rule of all his late and preſent majeſty's counſels; the rudder by which their actions have been ſteadily and conſtantly ſteered, with reſpect to the conduct of foreign

* Some Conſiderations on the Public Funds, p. 106.

reign princes and ſtates: Ever cautious not to plunge their faithful ſubjects raſhly into a ruinous war, and equally prepared and reſolved to protect their juſt rights againſt all attempts whatſoever, ſhould they be obliged to take up arms for that purpoſe. Chapter 63.

"Upon this principle it may be, and indeed has been, neceſſary to make, at different times, defenſive alliances in conjunction with, or in oppoſition to the ſame powers, as the different diſpoſitions and behaviour of thoſe powers might tend to the benefit or diſadvantage of this nation: And this ſeeming change of conduct will appear not to have ariſen from inconſtancy of temper, or of views on our part, but from the variation of views and intentions on the part of others."*

Objections of his opponents.

This preventive ſyſtem was inceſſantly reprobated by his adverſaries, and aſſailed with all the weapons of eloquence and wit. He was accuſed of extreme folly, in laying down a ſyſtem, prudent for a petty ſtate, but very improper for a country which had ſo great a ſway, and ought to take the lead in Europe. It was ſtigmatized as a ſervile ſubmiſſion to the influence and intereſts of France. His love of peace was characterized as a temporiſing ſyſtem of expedients, a dereliction of national honour, and a pacific obſtinacy. He was derided for fitting out proviſional fleets and pacific armaments, which plunged the nation into the ſame expence as an active war, while they produced nothing but Spithead exhibitions, and Hyde Park reviews.

Allowing,

* The Intereſts of Great Britain ſteadily purſued, p. 24.

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Effects of this pacific ſyſtem.

Allowing, however, the full effect of theſe objections, and making no abatements for the prejudices of party, and the jealouſy of political rivalſhip, few words are neceſſary to ſhew the beneficial conſequences which reſulted from the *general* tenor of his adminiſtration. The proteſtant ſucceſſion was eſtabliſhed, the Jacobite faction ſuppreſſed; the government acquired energy on a conſtitutional baſis; and by the prevention of foreign war, domeſtic tranquillity was ſecured. Under the calm ſtability of ſuch a government, public credit flouriſhed, commerce increaſed, manufactures were improved, and agriculture ameliorated.

French alliance.

The ſtrongeſt objection which has been urged againſt the miniſter, is that the general tendency of his foreign meaſures was calculated to aggrandize the houſe of Bourbon, and depreſs the houſe of Auſtria. In examining this topic, it is neceſſary to conſider the motives which induced him to adopt this line of conduct. He was fully aware that France was the only power which could effectually aſſiſt the Pretender; he conſtantly predicted, and the prediction was verified by the event, that whenever there was a war with France, the Britiſh crown would be fought for on Britiſh ground. By maintaining amity with France, during ſo long a period, he broke and diſpirited the diſaffected party at home, and diminiſhed the danger of an invaſion, by increaſing the friends, and reducing the enemies of the new family on the throne.

An act of policy, however, attendant on this alliance, which none of our hiſtorians ſeem ſufficiently to

to have appreciated, and which ſhewed great addreſs and prudence in the miniſters, was, their unceaſing attention to prevent the French from improving their fleet, or exerciſing their ſeamen. The *care of the ſea England took upon herſelf*; and Fleury was accuſed by the French, of having been cajoled by Walpole to ſacrifice the marine.

Conduct towards the Emperor.

If any part of Walpole's conduct ſtands peculiarly expoſed to cenſure, it is his refuſal to aſſiſt the houſe of Auſtria, when expoſed without an ally to the united efforts of France, Spain, and Sardinia.

As there is ſcarcely any vice without its concomitant virtue, ſo there is no virtue without an alloy. His well known deſire of peace, expoſed him to be over-reached by thoſe with whom he was treating, and who availed themſelves of his extreme unwillingneſs to engage in hoſtilities. In fact, the miniſter did not always appreciate the juſt maxim, "that the diſcovery of vehement wiſhes generally fruſtrates their attainment; that too much impatience to conclude a treaty, gives an adverſary great advantage; that a ſort of courage belongs to negotiation, as well as to operations in the field; and that a negotiator muſt ſeem willing to hazard all, if he wiſhes to ſecure any material object."*

Nothing can juſtify the deſertion of the Emperor, but the internal ſituation of the country, the fear of exciting diſcontents at the eve of a general election, and the full conviction that the Pretender would, in caſe of a rupture, receive aſſiſtance from France,

* Burke's Thoughts on a Regicide Peace.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. France, and attempt an invaſion. Nor can it be deemed an improbable ſuppoſition, that ſpirited reſolutions, if adopted in 1733, would have alarmed Fleury, inclined to pacific meaſures, and fearful of a rupture with England, when the French navy was almoſt annihilated, would have compelled France to guaranty the pragmatic ſanction, and thus have averted the danger, which the houſe of Auſtria incurred on the death of Charles the Sixth, of an irretrievable depreſſion.

But peace is ſo deſirable for a commercial country, that much praiſe muſt be due to the miniſter even for erring, if he erred, in preſerving ſo great a bleſſing. And who ſhall preſume to cenſure a conduct which conferred ineſtimable advantages, while it expoſed to uncertain evils; which by the increaſe of trade and manufactures, the neceſſary conſequences of a ſtable and tranquil government at home, gave to this country the ſinews of war, and enabled the greateſt war miniſter * whom this country ever produced, to make thoſe vaſt and glorious efforts which terminated in the depreſſion of the houſe of Bourbon.

Hanoverian influence. The oppoſers of Sir Robert Walpole invariably and conſtantly aſſerted, that his adminiſtration was founded on the open and manifeſt ſacrifice of the Britiſh glory and intereſt abroad, to thoſe foreign dominions in which it was even a condition in the act of ſettlement, that we ſhould have no concern, and which was acknowledged by the miniſters themſelves to be the touchſtone of all our negotiations

* William Pitt, earl of Chatham.

ations at every court of Europe.* But it muſt be allowed, even by thoſe who ſo peremptorily advanced this aſſertion, that never was the union of Hanover with Great Britain more conducive to the real intereſts of this country, if its *general* effects, notwithſtanding ſome occaſional deviations, contributed to preſerve us in peace abroad. Chapter 3.

In fact, though it cannot be denied, that German prejudices and partial intereſts occaſionally interfered with the great concerns of England, yet it is no leſs true, that no miniſter ever made ſo many, and ſuch powerful remonſtrances againſt petty Germanic ſchemes. He took all proper opportunities of inculcating juſt notions of dignity and credit. He had even the courage to obſerve to George the Second, that the welfare of his dominions both at home and abroad, and the felicity of Europe, depended on his being a great king, rather than a conſiderable elector.

He alſo laboured inceſſantly to mitigate the effects of the rooted inveteracy between the houſes of Brunſwick and Brandenburg. Finding the king vehement in a reſolution to commence hoſtilities with the king of Pruſſia, either for enrolling troops on the territories of Hanover, or for ſome inconſiderable acquiſition in Germany; he repreſented the danger and ill policy of the attempt. "Will your majeſty," he ſaid, "engage in an enterpriſe which muſt prove no leſs diſgraceful than diſadvantageous? Is not the inequality of forces ſo great, that

* Caſe of the Hanover forces.

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that Hanover will be no more than a breakfaſt to the Pruſſian army?"

If we compare the uniform conduct of Walpole with the uniform conduct of oppoſition, we ſhall find that he ſtruggled with all his might for the preſervation of the credit, quiet, and happineſs of the nation. They contended for ſuch proceedings as had a tendency to involve the country in all the misfortunes of foreign and domeſtic war.

While they were declaring that the nation was impoveriſhed, the trade ruined, the people loaded with inſupportable burthens, and all farther reſources totally cut off, they were clamouring for foreign aggreſſion, which would have required additional ſupplies, and increaſed the national embarraſſments. And when their unceaſing efforts had plunged the nation into a war, the public ſoon diſcovered the falſity of that aſſertion, ſo confidently thrown out for a number of years by Bolingbroke, and re-echoed by the members of oppoſition, that the preventive and temporiſing meaſures of Sir Robert Walpole had been attended with as much expence as an active war. For the war, which commenced in 1739, and terminated with the peace of Aix la Chapelle in 1749, added thirty millions to the national debt; and one year of the German war coſt more than all the preventive meaſures and *pacific obſtinacy* of Sir Robert Walpole during his whole adminiſtration.

Finance.

As an able miniſter of finance, his merit has been generally acknowledged, not only by his friends and

and admirers, but even by ſeveral of his moſt violent opponents. No one can ſuſpect Pitt of paying a tribute of applauſe to his memory from mean and adulatory motives; yet even he obſerved, in the houſe of commons, that Sir Robert Walpole was a very able miniſter. Perceiving ſeveral members laugh, he added, "The more I reflect on my conduct, the more I blame myſelf for oppoſing the exciſe bill," and concluded by ſaying, with his uſual energy; "Let thoſe who are aſhamed to confeſs their errors laugh out. Can it be deemed adulation to praiſe a miniſter who is no more?" The whole houſe ſeemed abaſhed, and became ſilent. *

It is unneceſſary to urge any other proof of his abilities for finance, than that confidence which, throughout his whole adminiſtration, monied men and the nation placed in the government; and that nothing created greater alarm among them, than the apprehenſions that he would either rapidly pay off the national debt, or reduce the intereſt. This fact is an anſwer to thoſe ſpeculative reaſoners, who not adverting to the temper of the times, and judging of paſt tranſactions by preſent circumſtances, indiſcriminately cenſure the miniſter for not diſcharging the whole public burthens, for alienating the ſinking fund, and for oppoſing Sir John Barnard's plan to reduce the intereſt of the national debt.

His

* Communicated by Dr. Symonds, profeſſor of modern languages in the univerſity of Cambridge, who was in the gallery of the houſe of commons at the time.

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His financial operations have been already ſo amply diſcuſſed in the courſe of theſe memoirs, * that it is needleſs to enlarge on particular topics. The improvement, however, in the mode of borrowing by means of exchequer bills, which I have omitted to mention, deſerves particular notice. The cuſtom was to borrow a large ſum, the intereſt of which continued to accrue till the whole ſum advanced on bills was paid off, though in the interval conſiderable portions of the money had been paid into the exchequer. Walpole made a reform in 1723, by which the bills were regularly taken up as the money came in, and by this means ſaved an enormous charge of intereſt to government. †

Public economy.

Parſimony of the public money was one of his chief characteriſtics. In corroboration of this fact, many inſtances occur in the courſe of this work, and diſplay him reſiſting expenditure, even in oppoſition to the wiſhes of the king. To this part of his conduct, the duke of Newcaſtle bore teſtimony, at the time when he was cenſuring his meaſures in other reſpects with the greateſt aſperity. "As this is a demand of money," he ſays, in a letter to lord Hardwicke, "we ſhall find Sir "Robert more difficult to comply than upon for-"mer occaſions." ‡

Commerical improvements.

The improvement of the Britiſh trade under his auſpices, is generally acknowledged. Dean Tucker calls

* See the chapters on exciſe, ſinking fund, and reduction of intereſt.

† A ſhort hiſtory of exchequer bills, which I found among the Orford papers, corrected by Sir Robert Walpole, will beſt elucidate this tranſaction. Correſpondence.

‡ Auguſt 19, 1741. Hardwicke papers.

calls him, "the beſt commercial miniſter this country ever produced;" * and it was juſtly ſaid of him, that he found the book of rates the worſt, and left it beſt in Europe. Chapter 63. 1745.

The eloquence of Sir Robert Walpole was plain, perſpicuous, forcible, and manly, not courting, yet not always avoiding metaphorical, ornamental, and claſſical alluſions; though addreſſed to the reaſon more than to the feelings, yet on ſome occaſions it was highly animated and impaſſioned. No debater was ever more happy in quickneſs of apprehenſion, ſharpneſs of reply, and in turning the arguments of his aſſailants againſt themſelves. Eloquence.

The tone of his voice was pleaſing and melodious; his pronunciation diſtinct and audible, though he never entirely loſt the provincial accent. His ſtyle, though by no means elegant, often deficient in taſte, and ſometimes bordering on vulgarity, was highly nervous and animated, perſuaſive and plauſible.

The force of his ſpeeches reſulted rather from the general weight, energy, and arrangement of the whole, than from the ſplendour of particular parts. He poſſeſſed what Horace calls *lucidus ordo*, a luminous arrangement of the moſt complicated ſubjects; and a power of communicating his information to others who were ignorant of the topics on which he treated. Even calculation in his mouth was rendered not unintereſting.

Perſons diſtinguiſhed for judgment and abilities, have

* Tucker againſt Locke, p. 222.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. have concurred in paying the tribute of applauſe to his oratorical talents. Speaker Onſlow commends his ſpeech on the peerage bill, as a remarkable effort of natural eloquence and genius.* Lord Cornbury and the duke of Argyle praiſed, in ſimilar terms, his ſpeech when he relinquiſhed the exciſe ſcheme; and Pitt extolled the Philippic againſt Sir William Wyndham on the ſeceſſion, as one of the fineſt ſpeeches he had ever heard.†

A proof of his ready eloquence, recorded by biſhop Newton, is given in this volume,‡ to which I am enabled to add another. During an important debate in the houſe of commons, he obſerved that a member of oppoſition who ſat near him, had a written ſpeech concealed in his hat, and obtained a general knowledge of the contents from occaſional glimpſes. At the moment when the member was about to ſpeak, he roſe, and began by obſerving, were I a member in oppoſition, I would make uſe of theſe arguments. He then recapitulated the ſpeech which he had juſt caſt his eyes over, and adding, I will now reply to theſe obſervations, he refuted the arguments in an able and maſterly manner.§

It was his cuſtom to note down the heads of the leading expreſſions in the ſpeeches of oppoſition, either for his own uſe, if he himſelf ſpoke, or for the uſe of Sir William Yonge, if abſent at the beginning of the debate, who often through the medium

* Speaker Onſlow's Remarks, Correſpondence, Period IV.

† From the late earl of Hardwicke.

‡ Chapter 7.

§ From lord Orford.

dium of these memorandums,* answered those arguments which he had not heard. As to himself, he generally spoke extempore, and without notes, except on points where figures and calculations were necessary. In some instances of great magnitude and delicacy, he put down previously general heads of the arguments which he intended to adopt. Some of these minutes are preserved among the Orford and Walpole Papers, and I have availed myself of them in the course of this work. Chapter 63. 1745.

Nor was his eloquence confined to the debates in parliament. As chancellor of the exchequer, he was called on to decide in a cause of great difficulty and importance, between Nash and the East India company. The barons being divided, it was his province, as chancellor, to make the decision; and after a long trial, in which six of the most able lawyers pleaded on each side for nineteen hours, he summed up the whole, and in a speech of an hour and a half, gave his opinion and sentence with as great skill, strength, eloquence, and clearness, "as if he had been bred to the law, and had practised no other business all his life." †

He gave to the public several political pamphlets, which, at the time, were much read. His style in these writings was popular, perspicuous, and Publications.

* Among the Orford and Walpole Papers, some of these parliamentary memorandums are preserved. They serve to establish one truth, which has been much questioned and controverted; that the debates which were given in the papers and periodical publications, were, upon the whole, not unfaithful. See Preface.

† Lord Hervey to Horace Walpole, November 18-29, 1735. Correspondence.

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and familiar; not affecting ambitious ornament, or ſubtilty of argument. He muſt have written with great eaſe and correctneſs, ſince "The Conſideration concerning the Public Funds," one of the moſt difficult and complicated of his works, was printed from the rough draught in his own hand writing.* I find many inſtances of his having reviſed, corrected, and made additions to numerous political pamphlets, particularly to thoſe written by lord Hervey; a proof that he paid more attention to that mode of controverſy than is uſually imagined.‡

He

* Orford Papers.

‡ It is extremely difficult to give an exact catalogue of his political writings. The liſt publiſhed by his ſon in the Royal and Noble Authors is both defective and inaccurate, as the late earl candidly acknowledged. I ſhall here give as accurate a liſt as it has been in my power to obtain, marking thoſe with a † which I have not been able to procure.

† The Sovereign's Anſwer to a Glouceſterſhire Addreſs.

A Letter to a Friend concerning the public Debts, particularly that of the Navy, 1710.

A State of the Thirty-five Millions mentioned in a Report of the Houſe of Commons, 1710.

The two laſt articles are compriſed in a publication, called The Debts of the Nation Stated and Conſidered, in four Letters, which is printed in Somers's Tracts. The two other letters, namely, An Eſtimate of the Debts of her Majeſty's Navy, and A Brief Account of the Debts provided for by the South Sea Act, 1712, have likewiſe been aſcribed to Sir Robert Walpole; but as it appears to me, without ſufficient foundation.

Four Letters to a Friend in North Britain, upon the publiſhing the Trial of Dr. Sacheverel, 1710.

† A Pamphlet on the Vote of the Houſe of Commons, with relation to the Allies not furniſhing their Quota.

A ſhort Hiſtory of the Parliament, 1713. A new edition of this pamphlet, from party motives, was given by Almon in 1763, under the title of "A Short Hiſtory of that Parliament which committed Sir Robert Walpole to the Tower, expelled him the Houſe of Commons, and approved of the infamous Peace of Utrecht." It was preceded by an advertiſement, which ſpeaks of Sir Robert Walpole as a miniſter *who had faithfully ſerved the crown five and twenty years.*

Thoughts of a Member of the Lower Houſe, in relation to a Project

He had a ready and tenacious memory. He was remarkable for method and diſpatch in tranſacting buſineſs. Cheſterfield, who did not love him, pays an eulogium to this quality: "The hurry and confuſion of the duke of Newcaſtle, do not proceed from his buſineſs, but from his want of method in it. Sir Robert Walpole who had ten times the buſineſs to do, was never ſeen in a hurry, becauſe he always did it with method *." And lord Hervey characteriſes him by obſerving that "he did every thing with the ſame eaſe and tranquillity as if he was doing nothing." ‡ Chapter 63. 1745. Diſpatch of buſineſs.

In 1723, he united the office of ſecretary of ſtate to his other employments, and in addition to the internal government of the kingdom, the whole correſpondence on foreign affairs devolved on him. During the illneſs of Sir William Strickland, which rendered him incapable of occupation, Walpole tranſacted all the buſineſs of ſecretary at war, although it was the middle of a ſeſſion of parliament.

It

for reſtraning and limiting the Power of the Crown in the further Creation of eers, 1719.

† The South Sea Scheme conſidered, 1720.

Some conſiderations concerning the Public Revenues, and the Annual Supplies granted by Parliament, occaſioned by a late Pamphlet, intituled, An Enquiry into the Conduct of our Domeſtic Affairs, from the Year 1721 to Chriſtmas 1733. 1735.

The late earl of Orford enumerates among his father's works, a letter from a foreign miniſter in England, to M. Pettekum, 1710. I have reaſon to think this pamphlet was not written by Sir Robert Walpole, as it is a vindication of the Tories. Probably he might have written an anſwer. On mentioning this circumſtance to the earl of Orford, he candidly acknowledged that he might have been miſtaken. See Royal and Noble Authors, Article, Earl of Orford.

* Lord Cheſterfield's Letters to his Son, Letter 309.

‡ October 31, 1735. Correſpondence.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. It is moſt remarkable, that notwithſtanding his extenſive correſpondence, he ſeems ſeldom to have employed a ſecretary. I have never found one letter which was not wholly written in his own hand; and I am fully convinced, that all the copies in the Hardwicke Collection, were taken from originals in his own writing.

It is alſo no leſs remarkable, that he was in the habit of tranſcribing whole letters, that he conſtantly noted the ſubſtance of the foreign correſpondence, and made numerous extracts from the diſpatches of foreign miniſters, which would lead a perſon not acquainted with his multifarious occupations, to conjecture that he ſtudied nothing but foreign affairs, while he was petulantly reproached by thoſe who witneſſed the invariable attention which he paid to the internal government of the country, for his ignorance of foreign tranſactions. The Orford and Walpole Papers abound with numerous extracts and memorandums, which prove his indefatigable exertions.

When the validity of the patent of collector of the cuſtoms, which he had ſecured for the benefit of his family, was diſputed, all the briefs for his counſel were drawn up by himſelf. * Murray, who was employed as counſel, in behalf of Madame le Neve, whoſe cauſe Orford warmly ſupported in the houſe of lords, ſaid of him, that he never met with any man with a clearer head and more perſpicuous method of arranging his ideas †.

The

* Etough.

† From the Earl of Orford.

Chapter 63. 1745.

The great principle on which Walpole conducted himſelf, ſeems to have been his favourite motto, *quieta non movere*, not to diſturb things at reſt. He rightly judged, from the temper of man, ever inclined to ſpeculation, that too frequent innovations would beget a proneneſs to change, and expoſe the country to great and certain dangers. An inſtance of his adherence to this principle, is recorded by one of his contemporaries. Soon after the exciſe ſcheme, Sir William Keith, who had been deputy governor of Virginia, came over with a plan of an American tax. Sir Robert Walpole being aſked by lord Cheſterfield what he thought of Sir William's project, replied, "I have old England ſet againſt me, and do you think I will have new England likewiſe *." But although he followed in general this true and wiſe principle, yet he by no means ſeems to have deſerved the cenſure paſſed upon him in common with the other miniſters: "That if any political ſyſtem was "invariably adhered to during the reign of George "the Second, the purport of it appears to have "been to leave things as they were, or to check "any attempt which might be made to innovation, "or even to inquiry †."

Diſlike of innovation.

His whole ſyſtem was a ſyſtem of gradual improvement: it is only neceſſary to caſt a ſuperficial glance over the regulations in commerce, finance, and juriſprudence, which took place during his adminiſtration, to be convinced of this truth.

The

* From the late earl of Hardwicke, communicated by lord Cheſterfield. Hardwicke Papers.

† Sinclair, vol. 2. p. 24.

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The fate of Sir Robert Walpole's character as a miniſter has been extremely ſingular. While he was in power, he was reviled with unceaſing obloquy, and his whole conduct arraigned as a maſs of corruption and political depravity. But he himſelf lived to ſee the propriety of his preventive meaſures acknowledged by the public. As time ſoftened the aſperities of perſonal animoſity, and as the ſpirit of party ſubſided, there was ſcarcely one of his opponents who did not publicly or privately retract their unqualified cenſures, and pay a due tribute to the wiſdom of the general principles which guided his adminiſtration. Impartial poſterity has done ſtill greater juſtice to the memory of a ſtateſman, who, whatever might have been his public or private defects, maintained his country in tranquillity for a longer period, than had been experienced ſince the reign of James the Firſt.

I ſhall cloſe this ſketch of Walpole's public character in the words of a celebrated writer, who alone ſeems to have fairly appreciated his merits and ſcanned his defects.

Character by Burke.

"He was an honourable man, and a ſound Whig. He was not, as the Jacobites and diſcontented Whigs of his own time have repreſented him, and as ill informed people ſtill repreſent him, a prodigal and corrupt miniſter. They charged him, in their libels and ſeditious converſations, as having firſt reduced corruption to a ſyſtem. Such was their cant. But he was far from governing by corruption. He governed by party attachments,

ments. The charge of ſyſtematic corruption is leſs applicable to him, perhaps, than to any miniſter who ever ſerved the crown for ſo great a length of time. He gained over very few from the oppoſition. Without being a genius of the firſt claſs, he was an intelligent, prudent, and ſafe miniſter. He loved peace; and he helped to communicate the ſame diſpoſition to nations at leaſt as warlike and reſtleſs as that in which he had the chief direction of affairs. Though he ſerved a maſter who was fond of martial fame, he kept all the eſtabliſhments very low. The land tax continued at two ſhillings in the pound for the greater part of his adminiſtration. The other impoſitions were moderate. The profound repoſe, the equal liberty, the firm protection of juſt laws, during the long period of his power, were the principal cauſes of that proſperity which took ſuch rapid ſtrides towards perfection; and which furniſhed to this nation, ability to acquire the military glory which it has ſince obtained, as well as to bear the burthens, the cauſe and conſequence of that warlike reputation. With many virtues, public and private, he had his faults; but his faults were ſuperficial. A careleſs, coarſe, and over familiar ſtyle of diſcourſe, without ſufficient regard to perſons or occaſions, and an almoſt total want of political decorum, were the errors by which he was moſt hurt in the public opinion, and thoſe through which his enemies obtained the greateſt advantage over him. But juſtice muſt be done. The prudence, ſteadineſs, and vigilance of that man, joined

to

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. to the greateſt poſſible lenity in his character and his politics, preſerved the crown to this royal family; and with it, their laws and liberties to this country." *

CHAPTER THE SIXTY-FOURTH.

Private Character of Sir Robert Walpole.—Perſon.—Diſpoſition.—Manners.—Social Qualities.—Neglect of Men of Letters.—Conduct in Retirement.

Perſon. SIR ROBERT WALPOLE was tall and well proportioned, and in his youth and opening manhood ſo comely, that at the time of his marriage he and his wife were called the *handſome couple*, and among the knights, who walked in proceſſion at the inſtallation of the garter, in 1725, he was, next to the duke of Grafton and lord Townſhend, moſt diſtinguiſhed for his appearance. As he advanced in years he became extremely corpulent and unwieldy. His countenance does not ſeem to have been remarkable for ſtrong traits. The features were regular; when he ſpoke, and particularly when he ſmiled, his phyſiognomy was pleaſing, benign, and enlightened: his eye was full of ſpirit and fire, and his brow prominent and manly.

Dreſs. His ſtyle of dreſs was uſually plain and ſimple; a circumſtance which was not overlooked by the Craftſman, who thus holds him up to ridicule; "There entered a man dreſſed in a *plain habit*, with a purſe of gold in his hand. He threw himſelf

* Burke's Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, p. 63.

ſelf forward into the room in a bluff ruffianly manner, a ſmile, or rather a ſneer upon his countenance." * His addreſs was ſo frank and open, his converſation ſo pleaſing, and his manner ſo faſcinating, that thoſe who lived with him in habits of intimacy adored him, thoſe who ſaw him occaſionally loved him, and even his moſt bitter opponents could not hate him. One of theſe did not heſitate to ſay of him, "Never was a man in private life more beloved: And his enemies allow no man did ever in private life deſerve it more. He was humane and grateful, and a generous friend to all who he did not think would abuſe that friendſhip. This character naturally procured that attachment to his perſon, which has been falſely attributed ſolely to a corrupt influence and to private intereſt; but this ſhewed itſelf at a time when theſe principles were very faint in their operations, and when his ruin ſeemed inevitable." † Chapter 6. 1745. Addreſs.

Good temper and equanimity were his leading characteriſtics, and the placability imprinted on his countenance was not belied by his conduct. Of this diſpoſition, his generous rival, Pulteney, thought ſo highly, that in a converſation with Johnſon, he ſaid, "Sir Robert was of a temper ſo calm and equal, and ſo hard to be provoked, that he was very ſure he never felt the bittereſt invectives againſt him for half an hour." ‡ Temper.

His deportment was manly and deciſive, yet affable and condeſcending; he was eaſy of acceſs; his Affability.

* No. 16.

† Faction Detected, p. 62.

‡ Hawkins's Life of Johnſon, p. 314.

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his method of beſtowing a favour heightened the obligation; and his manner of declining was ſo gracious that few perſons went out of his company diſcontented.

Gaiety.

Among thoſe parts of his convivial character which have attracted attention, his laugh is noticed for ſingular gaiety and heartineſs. His ſon familiarly obſerved to me, "It would have done you good to hear him laugh." Sir Charles Hanbury Williams ſays of him that he "*laugh'd the hearts laugh.*" Nicholas Hardinge elegantly noticed its peculiarity, "*proprioque vincit ſeria riſu.*"

Converſation.

His converſation was ſprightly, animated and facetious, yet occaſionally coarſe and vulgar, and too often licentious to an unpardonable degree.

Manners.

In company with women he aſſumed an air of gallantry, which even in his younger days was ill-ſuited to his manner and character, but in his latter years was totally incompatible with his age and figure. He affected in his converſation with the ſex a trifling levity; but his gaiety was rough and boiſterous, his wit too often coarſe and licentious.

If we may believe lord Cheſterfield, who knew him well, but whoſe pen was dipped in gall when he drew his character, "His prevailing weakneſs was to be thought to have a polite and happy turn to gallantry, of which he had undoubtedly leſs than any man living; it was his favourite and frequent ſubject of converſation; which proved to thoſe who had any penetration, that it was his prevailing weakneſs, and they applied to it with ſucceſs*." Pulteney alſo ſaid of him, "A writer who

* Lord Cheſterfield's Letters to his Son, 1.97.

who would tell him of his ſucceſs in his amours, would gain his confidence in a higher degree than one who commended the conduct of his adminiſtration *." To this foible alſo a poetaſter, after ſpeaking of him under the name of Sir Robert Braſs, alludes,— Chapter 64. 1745.

"Nay, to divert the ſneering town,
"Is next a general lover grown,
"Affects to talk of his amours,
"And boaſts of having ruined ſcores,
"While all who hear him bite the lip,
"And ſcarce with pain their laughter keep †."

This foible he ſhared in common with many able men, and particularly with cardinal Richelieu, who piqued himſelf more on being a man of gallantry than on being a great miniſter. It is ſome conſolation for perſons of inferior abilities, that men of ſuperior talents are not exempt from the infirmities of human nature, and it is no uncommon circumſtance, to prefer flattery on thoſe points in which we wiſh to excel, to juſt praiſe for thoſe in which we are known to excel.

He is juſtly blamed for a want of political decorum, and for deriding public ſpirit, to which Pope alludes,— Unreſervedneſs.

"Would he oblige me! let me only find,
"He does not think me, what he thinks mankind."

Although it is not poſſible to juſtify him, yet this part of his conduct has been greatly exaggerated. The political axiom generally attributed to him, that *all men have their price*, and which has

* A proper reply to a late ſcurrilous Libel, p. 8.
† Sir Robert Braſs. A Poem.

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. has been ſo often repeated in verſe and proſe, was perverted by leaving out the word *thoſe*. Flowery oratory he deſpiſed; he aſcribed to the intereſted views of themſelves or their relatives, the declarations of pretended patriots, of whom he ſaid, "*All thoſe men have their price*," and in the event, many of them juſtified his obſervation *. No man was more ready to honour and do juſtice to ſincerity and conſiſtency. He always mentioned his friend the duke of Devonſhire in terms of the higheſt affection and reſpect, and even applauded the uniform conduct of one of his conſtant opponents. "I will not ſay," he obſerved, "who is corrupt, but I will ſay who is not, and that is Shippen."

Conſiſtency. His own conduct ſufficiently belied the axiom erroneouſly imputed to him. He was conſiſtent and uniform, never deviating in one ſingle inſtance from his attachment to the proteſtant ſucceſſion. He was neither awed by menaces or ſwayed by corruption; he held one line of conduct with unabating perſeverance, and terminated his political career with the ſame ſentiments of loyalty which diſtinguiſhed his outſet.

Profuſion. He was naturally liberal, and even prodigal. His buildings at Houghton were more magnificent than ſuited his circumſtances, and drew on him great obloquy. He felt the impropriety of this expenditure, and on ſeeing his brother's houſe at Wolterton, expreſſed his wiſhes that he had contented himſelf with a ſimilar ſtructure †. The following anecdote alſo ſhews that he regretted his

* From lord Orford and the late lord John Cavendiſh.

† From lord Walpole.

his profuſion: Sitting by Sir John Hynde Cotton, during the reign of queen Anne, and in alluſion to a ſumptuous houſe which was then building by Harley; he obſerved that to conſtruct a great houſe was a high act of imprudence in any miniſter. Afterwards, when he had pulled down the family manſion at Houghton, and raiſed a magnificent edifice, being reminded of that obſervation by Sir John Hynde Cotton, he readily acknowledged its juſtneſs and truth, but added, "Your recollection is too late, I wiſh you had reminded me of it before I began building, it might then have been of ſervice to me." * Chapter 64. 1745.

His ſtyle of living was conſonant to the magnificence of his manſion. He had uſually two annual meetings at Houghton, the one in the ſpring, to which were invited only the moſt ſelect friends and the leading members of the cabinet, continued about three weeks. The ſecond was in autumn, towards the commencement of the ſhooting ſeaſon. It continued ſix weeks or two months, and was called the congreſs. At this time Houghton was filled with company from all parts. He kept a public table, to which all gentlemen in the county found a ready admiſſion. Hoſpitality.

The expences of theſe meetings have been computed at £. 3,000 a year. Nothing could be more ill-judged than the enormous profuſion, except the company for which it was made. The mixed multitude conſiſted of his friends in both houſes, and of their friends. The noiſe and uproar, the waſte

* From the late Sir John Hynde Cotton.

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waſte and confuſion were prodigious. The beſt friends of Sir Robert Walpole in vain remonſtrated againſt this ſcene of riot and miſrule. As the miniſter himſelf was fond of mirth and jollity, the conviviality of their meetings was too frequently carried to exceſs, and lord Townſhend, whoſe dignity of deportment and decorum of character revolted againſt theſe ſcenes, which he called the Bacchanalian orgies of Houghton, not unfrequently quitted Rainham during their continuance. But notwithſtandinding theſe cenſures, and the impropriety of ſuch conduct, it undoubtedly gained and preſerved to the miniſter numerous adherents, who applauded a mode of living ſo analogous to the ſpirit of ancient hoſpitality.

Diſintereſtedneſs.

This profuſion would have been highly diſgraceful had it been attended with a rapacious diſpoſition. On the contrary, he gave many inſtances of careleſſneſs and diſregard of his private fortune. He expended £. 14,000 in building a new lodge in Richmond park,* and when the king, on the death of Bothmar, in 1738, offered him the houſe in Downing-ſtreet, he refuſed it as his own property, but accepted it as an appendage to the office of chancellor of the exchequer.†

Love of field ſports.

He was, from his early youth, fond of the diverſions of the field, and retained this taſte till prevented by the infirmities of age. He was accuſtomed to hunt in Richmond park with a pack of beagles. On receiving a packet of letters he uſually opened that from his game-keeper firſt; and

* From lord Orford. † From lord Walpole.

and he was fond of ſitting for his picture in his ſporting dreſs. He was, like chancellor Oxenſtiern, a ſound ſleeper, and uſed to ſay, "that he put off his cares with his cloaths." Chapter 64. 1745.

His ſocial qualities were generally acknowledged. He was animated and lively in converſation, and in the moment of feſtivity realiſed the fine eulogium which Pope has given of him,— Social qualities.

"Seen him, I have, but in his happier hour
"Of ſocial pleaſure, ill-exchang'd for power;
"Seen him uncumber'd with the venal tribe,
"Smile without art, and win without a bribe."
Epilogue to the Satires.

To the virtues of Sir Robert Walpole I feel regret in not being able to add that he was the patron of letters and the friend of ſcience. But he unqueſtionably does not deſerve that honourable appellation, and in this inſtance his rank in the Temple of Fame is far inferior to that of Halifax, Oxford, and Bolingbroke. It is a matter of wonder that a miniſter who had received a learned education, and was no indifferent ſcholar, ſhould have paid ſuch a little attention to the muſes; nor can it be denied, that this neglect of men of letters, was highly diſadvantageous to his adminiſtration, and expoſed him to great obloquy. The perſons employed in juſtifying his meaſures, were by no means equal to the taſk of combating Pulteney, Bolingbroke, and Cheſterfield, thoſe Goliahs of Oppoſition; and the political pamphlets written in his defence, are far inferior in humour, argu- Neglect of Men of Letters.

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ment, and ſtyle, to the publications of his adverſaries.

Pope has ably ſatiriſed the herd of political writers employed by the miniſter, in the Dunciad,—

"Next plung'd a feeble, but a deſperate pack,
"With each a ſickly brother at his back:
"Sons of a day! juſt buoyant on the flood,
"Then number'd with the puppies in the mud,
"Aſk ye their names? I could as ſoon diſcloſe,
"The name of theſe blind puppies as of thoſe.
"Faſt by, like Niobe, (her children gone)
"Sits mother Oſborne, ſtupify'd to ſtone!
"And monumental braſs this record bears,
"Theſe are,—ah, no, theſe were the gazetteers!"

But that he did not wholly neglect literary merit, appears from the grateful ſtrains of the author of the Night Thoughts, for whom he procured a penſion from George the Firſt, which was increaſed at his ſuggeſtion by George the Second, to £. 200 a year, at that time no inconſiderable reward.

At this the muſe ſhall kindle, and aſpire:
My breaſt, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire,
The ſtreams of royal bounty turn'd by thee,
Refreſh the dry remains of poeſy.
My fortune ſhews, when arts are Walpole's care,
What ſlender worth forbids us to deſpair:
Be this thy partial ſmile from cenſure free;
'Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me. *

The truth is, Sir Robert Walpole neither delighted in letters, nor conſidered poets as men of

* Young's Inſtalment, addreſſed to Sir Robert Walpole.

of buſineſs. He was accuſtomed to ſay, that they were fitter for ſpeculation than for action, that they truſted to theory, rather than to experience, and were guided by principles inadmiſſible in practical life. His opinion was confirmed by the experience of his own time. Prior made but an indifferent negotiator; his friend Steele was wholly incapable of application, and Addiſon a miſerable ſecretary of ſtate. He was ſo fully impreſſed with theſe notions, that when he made Congreve commiſſioner of the cuſtoms, he ſaid, "You will find he has no head for buſineſs." Chapter 64. 1745.

Low perſons were employed by government, and profuſely paid, ſome of whom not unfrequently propagated in private converſation, and even in public clubs, diſadvantageous reports of the miniſter, and declared that high rewards induced them to write againſt their real ſentiments. Several known diſſeminators of infidelity, were engaged to defend his meaſures. Many warm remonſtrances were frequently made by the miniſter's friends againſt employing ſuch low mercenaries, but uſually diſregarded. Some of theſe inſignificant writers had frequent acceſs to him. Their deluſive and encouraging accounts of perſons and things, were too often more credited, than the ſincere and free intimations of thoſe who were more capable of giving accurate information. But this ſeems an error too common in miniſters: they prefer favourable accounts to diſmal truth, and readily believe what they wiſh to be true.

Conduct in retirement.

It is a natural curioſity to inquire into the behaviour and occupations of a miniſter retired

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from buſineſs, and diveſted of power. Thoſe who admired his talents, while he ſwayed ſenates and governed kingdoms, contemplate him, "in their mind's eye," enjoying his retreat with dignity, and paſſing his leiſure hours with calmneſs and complacency. Yet nothing in general is more unſatisfactory than ſuch an inquiry, or more illuſive than ſuch a preconceived opinion. The well-known ſaying, that "no man is a hero to his valet de chambre," may be applied with ſtrict juſtice to this caſe. Sir Robert Walpole experienced the truth of the obſervation, that a fallen miniſter is like a profeſſed beauty, who has loſt her charms, and to whom the recollection of paſt conqueſts, but poorly compenſates for preſent neglect.

Though he had not forgotten his claſſical attainments, he had little taſte for literary occupations. He once expreſſed his regret on this ſubject to a friend, who was reading in the library at Houghton. "I wiſh," he ſaid, "I took as much delight in reading as you do, it would be the means of alleviating many tedious hours in my preſent retirement; but to my misfortune I derive no pleaſure from ſuch purſuits."—On another occaſion, he ſaid to his ſon Horace, who, with a view to amuſe him, was preparing to read ſome hiſtorical performance, "O! do not read hiſtory, for that I know muſt be falſe." *

His principal amuſement conſiſted in planting, obſerving the growth of his former plantations, and

* From lord Orford.

and in ſeeing his ſon Horace arrange the fine collection of pictures at Houghton. He had a good taſte for painting, and his obſervations on the ſtyle of the reſpective maſters were uſually judicious. Chapter 64. 1745.

A letter which he wrote from Houghton to general Churchill, in 1743, was much admired, as indicating a love of retirement, and contempt of paſt grandeur. Yet this letter ſtrikes me in a contrary light; it proves that he was weary of that repoſe which he affected to praiſe; and that he did not, as much as he profeſſed, taſte the charms of the inanimate world. The trite obſervation, that the beeches do not deceive, proves either that he regretted times paſt, or that with all his penetration, he had not, when in power, made a juſt eſtimate of the deceitfulneſs and treachery of dependents and courtiers. * Houghton had been

* Earl of Orford to general Churchill.

Houghton, June 24th 1743.

Dear Charles,

. . . . . .

This place affords no news, no ſubject of entertainment, or amuſement, for fine men of wit and pleaſure about town, underſtand not the language, and taſte not the pleaſure of the inanimate world. My flatterers here are all mutes. The oaks, the beeches, the cheſnuts, ſeem to contend which beſt ſhall pleaſe the lord of the manor. They cannot deceive, they will not lie. I in ſincerity admire them, and have as many beauties about me as fill up all my hours of dangling, and no diſgrace attends me from 67 years of age. Within doors we come a little nearer to real life, and admire, upon the almoſt ſpeaking canvaſs, all the airs and graces which the proudeſt ladies can boaſt. With theſe I am ſatisfied, as they gratify me with all I wiſh, and all I want, and expect nothing in return, which I cannot give.

If theſe, dear Charles, are any temptations, I heartily invite you to come and partake of them. Shifting the ſcene has ſometimes its recommendation, and from country fare, you may poſſibly return with a better appetite to the more delicate entertainments of a court life.

Since

Period VIII. 1742 to 1745. been either the temporary place of retirement from public buſineſs, or the ſcene of friendly intercourſe and convivial jollity, and neglect rendered it comparatively a ſolitude. He ſaw and felt this deſertion with greater ſenſibility than became his good ſenſe; but in the calm of total retirement, ſuch diſagreeable reflections occur often and ſink deep. The ſeaſon of natural gaiety was irrecoverably paſt, he laboured under a painful diſtemper; the ill-aſſorted marriage of his eldeſt ſon, and embarraſſed ſituation of his own affairs increaſed his dejection.

This ſtate of mind was natural. Every circumſtance muſt have appeared unintereſting to a man, who from the twenty-third year of his age, had been uniformly engaged in ſcenes of political exertion; who, from the commencement of his parliamentary career, had paſſed a life of unremitting activity, and made a conſpicuous figure in the ſenate, and in the cabinet.

To him who had directed the helm of Government in England, and whoſe deciſions affected the intereſts of Europe in general, all ſpeculative

Since I wrote the above, we have been ſurpriſed with the good news* from abroad. Too much cannot be ſaid of it. It is truly matter of infinite joy, becauſe of infinite conſequence.

I am, dear Charles,
Yours moſt affectionately, Orford.

This letter is here printed from a copy kindly communicated by lord Calthorpe, who found it among his family papers. His lordſhip's grandfather, Sir Henry Gough, baronet, was neighbour to Sir Robert Walpole, at Chelſea, and was in habits of intimacy with him. It is printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1743, with many errors, which are rectified in this copy. An elegant imitation of this letter in Latin verſe is given in the Correſpondence.

* The battle of Dettingen.

opinions

opinions must have appeared dull; to him who had drawn all his knowledge and experience from practice, all theory must have appeared trifling or erroneous. He who had fathomed the secrets of all the cabinets of Europe, must have considered history as a tissue of fables, and have smiled at the folly of those writers, who affect to penetrate into state affairs, and trace all the motives of action. He who had long been the dispenser of honours and wealth must have perceived a wide difference between the cold expressions of duty and friendship, and the warm effusions of that homage, which self-interest and hope inspire in those who court or expect favours. He must have been divested of human passions, had he not experienced some mortification in finding, that he was indebted to his situation for much of that obsequious regard which he fondly thought was paid to his personal qualities. Chapter 64. 1745.

I shall conclude this sketch of his private character, with a portrait, drawn from the life, by his friend Sir Charles Hanbury Williams, in an epistle to Henry Fox.

> But Orford's self, I've seen, whilst I have read,
> Laugh the heart's laugh, and nod the approving head.
> Pardon, great shade, if duteous on thy hearse,
> I hang my grateful tributary verse;
> If I who followed thro' thy various day,
> Thy glorious zenith, and thy bright decay;
> Now strew thy tomb with flowers, and o'er thy urn,
> With England, Liberty, and Envy, mourn.
> His soul was great, and dar'd not but do well;
> His noble pride still urg'd him to excel,

Above

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Above the thirſt of gold—if in his heart
Ambition govern'd, av'rice had no part,
A genius to explore untrodden ways,
Where prudence ſees no track, nor ever ſtrays;
Which books and ſchools in vain attempt to teach,
And which laborious art can never reach.
Falſhood and flattery, and the tricks of court,
He left to ſtateſmen of a meaner ſort:
Their cloaks and ſmiles were offer'd him in vain;
His acts were juſtice which he dar'd maintain,
His words were truth, that held them in diſdain.
Open to friends, but e'en to foes ſincere,
Alike remote from jealouſy and fear;
Tho' Envy's howl, tho' Faction's hiſs he heard,
Tho' ſenates frown'd; tho' death itſelf appeared;
Calmly he viewed them; conſcious that his ends
Were right, and truth and innocence his friends.
Thus was he form'd to govern and to pleaſe;
Familiar greatneſs, dignity with eaſe,
Compos'd his frame; admir'd in ev'ry ſtate,
In private amiable, in public great;
Gentle in power, but daring in diſgrace;
His love was liberty, his wiſh was peace.
Such was the man that ſmil'd upon my lays;
And what can heighten thought or genius raiſe,
Like praiſe from him whom all mankind muſt praiſe?
Whoſe knowledge, courage, temper, all ſurpris'd,
Whom many lov'd, few hated, none deſpis'd.

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